A

HISTORY

OF

THE POLITICAL LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT;

INCLUDING

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE TIMES IN WHICH HE LIVED.

BY JOHN GIFFORD, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

NEC SIBI, SED TOTI GENITUM SE CREDERE MUNDO.—*LUCAN.*

VOL. III.

London:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, STRAND;
By GEORGE SIDNEY, Northumberland Street.

1809.

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THE POLITICAL LIFE OF MR. PITT.

CHAPTER XXXI.

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[1796-1797.] AFTER the full and explicit avowal, on the part of the French Directory, of a determination not even to enter upon a negotiation for peace, without the previous admission, by the British Cabinet, of a principle, subversive of the settled maxims of public law, destructive of the rights of independent States, and asserting the paramount authority of the French Republic over every established government, and of her legislative decrees over all the codes and constitutions of Europe;—after the opposition of so formidable an obstacle to her pacific overtures, England, in her better days, would have disdained again to solicit a peace, without the intervention of any new circumstance, without any perceptible change in the disposition or councils of France, from implacable enemies, who consulted neither the interests nor the happiness of the country, over which they had, most unexpectedly, been

called to rule, and who knew not how to conduct themselves with propriety or decency to other sovereign powers.

Even Mr. Fox could not but condemn, as unjust, the revolutionary principle asserted by the Directory, in their answer to Mr. Wickham's note; although he chose to consider it as a mere pretext, suited to the particular occasion, and not meant to be adopted as a rule of action. All laws, which relate to matters of positive institution, are obligatory on those only by whose authority, either expressed or implied, they are enacted. They derive their sole sanction and efficacy from the real or supposed assent of those who are immediately subject to their operation, which is, consequently, confined to the limits of the state in which they originate. It is this extent of jurisdiction which constitutes the principal difference between municipal and public law. Destined, as mankind are, for social purposes, and scattered, as they are, over the whole surface of the globe, they necessarily form themselves into separate and independent nations, which, however, from the same principle by which men are led to congregate in large bodies, preserve, in different degrees, a mutual intercourse. For the regulation of this intercourse, which corresponds exactly to the intercourse which subsists between individuals, a rule of law is equally necessary. But, as no law can be binding except it be acknowledged by those whom it is meant to affect; and as no independent community will acknowledge the rules which another may prescribe, the law of nations, of necessity, consists of the dictates of natural reason, and the stipulation of mutual Convention. From this difference between the extent of operation, which the law of nations, and municipal law, respectively, possess, and from the review of the principle on which the difference is founded, it will appear, that the private regulations of a particular community cannot have any force, or applicability, in a transaction between that and any other community. To make such an application, is to confound every principle by which laws are made, and from which they derive their sanction. It is the assumption of a prerogative of dispensing, by the legislative authority of one nation, with the interests and engagements of other States; of controlling their independence, and of limiting their rights.

But if this doctrine be more fixed in its principle, more free from objection, and more strong in its application, in one case than in another, it is in that of a negotiation for peace between two belligerent States. In such case, whatever may be the fundamental laws of each nation, the terms of adjustment are always regulated by their relative force, and their relative necessity The quantum of concession which either may be induced to make is measured by the extent of its remaining power, and the pressure of its increasing distresses. It is not only impertinent, and absurd in the highest degree, in reference to its adversary, to advance an internal regulation as an impediment to the conditions which the other, on a view of its comparative situation, may be entitled to exact; but the public functionary of a state is, in fact, always considered, from reasons of general policy, as possessing, on such a view, the power of consenting to those conditions, even though they should be contrary to the directions of its municipal law.*

These principles are so plain and common, and have been acquiesced in so long by all civilized States, that any explanation of them would be unnecessary for any other purpose than that of shewing that the Executive Directory acted in open contradiction to them all, when they declared to Mr. Wickham, that the Constitutional Act did not permit them to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the existing law, constituted the territory of the Republic. Now, the Constitutional Act of France, had it been framed antecedently to the commencement of hostilities, could not have been binding upon foreign powers, and, therefore, could not be brought forward as a valid instrument applicable to them. But, in fact, it was enacted during the war, at a time when some parts of the territory of the Republic were in the hands of her enemies, and when that portion of territory, which she had conquered from them, and had thought proper, by the law in question, to call an integral part of France, was only her's by the chance of war, of which she was liable to be dispossessed by the same means. Any provision of this nature was, therefore, plainly made in her own wrong, as far as she meant to insist on its admission, as a preliminary to negotiation;—besides, this law, the violation of which was stated to be beyond

* Vattel. B. 1, S. 262.

the prerogative of the Directory, was itself a direct violation of the law of nations. The right of conquest is only inchoate,* and receives completion solely from the definitive articles of a treaty of peace. The Republic, therefore, had no legitimate power to appropriate to herself the countries which her armies occupied. She possessed over them only a transitory dominion, which no partial act of her own could make permanent and lawful.†

It was the first time that any belligerent power had the audacity to propose, as an indispensable preliminary to negotiation, that she should retain every conquest which she had made herself, and that every one of her possessions, which had been taken by her enemy, should be restored. A simple avowal of such monstrous and exorbitant ambition would have been sufficient, without further aggravation, to defeat all reasonable hopes of accommodation. But the pretension was so urged as even to preclude all discussion. It was not one which admitted of modification by reasoning and expostulation. It was, at once, definitive in its nature; no proposal, which was contrary to it, would be listened to; the previous concession of it was the *sine quâ non* of negotiation.—"A previous concession, which," says a contemporary writer, with the spirit of a genuine Englishman, "I know not whether we should have been inclined to make, if the Gauls had been in our capital, and the tri-coloured flag flying on the Tower; and I am sure, if it had been made at the juncture alluded to, we should have deserved the same insult with which their ancestors, on one occasion, reproached the ancient Romans,—*Auditaque intoleranda Romanis vox, væ victis esse.*"

This outrageous pretension was justly considered, by the Minister, as an insurmountable bar to peace; and, therefore, his Majesty had declared, that, while such dispositions were persisted in, nothing was left for him, but to prosecute the war. Not the smallest indication of a change in this disposition had appeared since; yet Mr. Pitt, anxious, if possible, to silence the clamours for peace, which had been artfully ex-

* Vattel, B. 3, S. 197.

† Remarks on the Conduct of the respective Governments of Great Britain and France, on the late negotiations for peace, 1797. P. 14.

cited; and, to satisfy the Opposition, who had incessantly shifted their ground, and, when the measures which they had declared would be satisfactory to them had been adopted, found some reason or other for dissatisfaction; and willing, also, to put the French Rulers so completely in the wrong as to render it impossible for any Englishman again to plead their cause, and to justify their conduct, resolved to make a direct proposal for peace. For this purpose, an application was made to the Directory, through the Danish Minister, at Paris, for passports for a person of confidence, whom his Majesty would send to Paris, with a commission to discuss, with the Government there, all the means most proper to put an end to the war, by just, honourable, and permanent conditions of peace. This note was dated on the sixth of September; and Mr. Koenemann, the Danish Chargè D'Affaires, delivered it to Mr. Delacroix, the French Minister for foreign affairs, who promised that an answer should be sent after it had been submitted to the consideration of the government. But, having waited three days, without receiving any answer, Mr. Koenemann renewed his application to Delacroix, who informed him, that the Directory would allow him to give only a verbal answer, to this effect,—that they would not, for the future, receive, or answer, any overtures, or confidential papers, transmitted through any intermediate channel, from the enemies of the Republic; but that, if they would send persons furnished with full powers, and official papers, these might, upon the frontiers, demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris.

Nothing could be more repulsive than this reply; nor more fully indicative of the hostile disposition of the French government. The Minister, however, was not to be deterred by such difficulties, from extorting the desired explanation. Lord Grenville, therefore, on the twenty-seventh of September, wrote directly to Delacroix, observing that, in his previous application, the Court of London had expressly declared, that a person should be commissioned to discuss, with the French government, all the means the most proper for conducing to the re-establishment of peace. The King, still perserving in the same sentiments which he had already so unequivocally declared, would not leave to his enemies the smallest pretext for eluding a discussion, the result of which would necessarily serve either to produce the happiness

of many nations, or, at least, to render evident the views and dispositions of those who opposed themselves to it. It was, therefore, declared, that, as soon as the Executive Directory should transmit passports, the King would send a person to Paris, furnished with full powers, and official instructions, to negotiate, with the French government, on the means of restoring general tranquillity to Europe. The Directory, aware that the refusal of passports would render them extremely unpopular, ordered Delacroix to transmit them; and Lord Malmesbury, the appointed minister, accordingly repaired to Paris. In a short memorial, presented to Delacroix, on the 24th of October, his Lordship stated the principle on which it was proposed to treat, namely, by offering compensation to France, by proportionable restitutions, for those arrangements to which she would be called upon to consent, in order to satisfy the just demands of the King's allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe.

This drew forth an angry communication from the Directory, in their usual style of republican rudeness, and indecent insinuation, the object of which was to enforce an observance of their settled policy, by persuading Great Britain to treat for herself alone, for the terms of a *separate* peace. In regard to the proposed principle, they observed, that "such a principle, presented in a vague and insulated manner, could not serve as a basis of negotiation." They further demanded *specific propositions* to be made to them! Lord Malmesbury, in his reply, remarked, that, with regard to the offensive and injurious insinuations thrown out by the Directory, and which were only calculated to put new obstacles in the way of that accommodation which the French government professed to desire, the King deemed it far beneath his dignity to permit an answer to be made to them, on his part, in any manner whatsoever. His Lordship then exposed the futility of the objections started by the Directory to the proposed mode of negotiation,—declared the firm resolution of his Court never to abandon its allies,—and demanded a frank, and precise, explanation of the intentions of the Directory as to the admission of the principle of negotiation. In answer, the British Minister was called upon, without, however, any admission of the principle, "to point out, without the smallest

delay, and expressly, the objects of reciprocal compensation," meant to be proposed. This demand was, very properly, rejected, on the ground of its perfect inutility before the formal acceptance of the principle advanced, or the proposal, by the Directory, of some other principle, which might serve as the basis of a negotiation for a general peace. No satisfaction, however, could be obtained, on this point, from the Directory, until a period of fifteen days had elapsed, when, after much equivocation and evasion, Delacroix was instructed to declare, (in direct contradiction to the truth) that the answers, before given, contained an acknowledgement of the principle of compensation;* but, in order to remove all doubt, on that subject, he was now authorized to make a positive and formal declaration of that acknowledgment.

The preliminary principle being, at length, agreed upon, Lord Malmesbury, on the 17th of December, delivered, to Delacroix, a memorial, containing the specific proposals of the British Court.—These were, the restitution of all the Imperial dominions, to the Emperor, as they stood before the war; a peace with the Germanic Empire, negotiated with the Emperor, as its lawful head; and the evacuation of Italy, by the French troops, with the restoration of its former governments, and an engagement never to interfere in its internal concerns. In return for these concessions, on the part of France, Great Britain offered to restore all the places which she had taken from France, during the war, and to replace every thing between the two countries on the same footing on which it stood previous to the commencement of hostilities. It was also stated, that, if the Directory should object to these proposals, the British Court would be glad to receive any counter-project which they might think proper to present. In a long conference between the two Ministers, which followed the delivery of this paper, Delacroix plainly shewed that the Directory would never submit to the restitution of the Austrian Netherlands; and he wished to extort Lord Malmesbury's assent to a proposition for indemnifying the Emperor for the loss of them, by giving to him the

* A reference to the two papers here alluded to, of the 5th and 25th Brumaire, will suffice to prove, that they do not contain any thing to justify this assertion of the Directory.

territories of some of the German Princes, which were not even in possession of the French armies; but over which the Directory asserted as absolute a right of disposal as if they had been obtained by conquest, or acquired by the less questionable mode of voluntary surrender. To a proposal so completely revolutionary, it was not, of course, thought proper to give any serious answer. The French government argued, too, the necessity of some addition to the territory of France, in order to counterbalance that increased strength which Austria, Russia, and Prussia, had acquired by the recent partition of Poland; but this argument was ingeniously repelled by Lord Malmesbury, by the admission of Delacroix, in a former conference, that France had acquired more vigour and power than it possessed under the Monarchy, from the change in her political system; his expression was,—"*We are no longer in the decrepitude of Monarchical France, but in the full strength of a youthful Republic.*" Thus foiled with his own weapons, the subtle Frenchman now strove to apply his declaration to *past* times: "*In the revolutionary period,*" said he, "*all that you say, my Lord, was true; nothing equalled our power; but that period is past. We are no longer able to raise the nation in a mass, to fly to the relief of the country when in danger. We can no longer persuade our fellow-citizens to open their purses in order to pour their contents into the national treasury, and to deprive themselves of necessaries for the public good.*" This was an acknowledgement that the boasted patriotism of the people of France had only subsisted during the reign of terror, and that the moment a system of comparative moderation was pursued, their patriotism fled, and their enthusiasm dissappeared.

During the course of this discussion, the superiority of the English negotiator over the French was most marked and decisive. But it was perfectly clear, from the very beginning of the negotiation, that the Executive Directory had not the smallest intention, or wish, to conclude a peace. They had been led on, step by step, by the wary and able conduct of the British Court; and, afraid of affording a hold to their enemies in France, who were very numerous, even in the two Councils, they were constrained, as it were, to enter upon a negotiation, which they were anxious to stop at the outest. They had now received those

specific proposals, for which they had so loudly, and so peremptorily, called; and it, of course, became their duty to give a direct and positive answer to them; and, in case they objected to the terms proposed by the British Court, to specify the conditions on which they were disposed to make peace. But this plain and regular mode of proceeding did not suit the views of a revolutionary government, who were bent on the accomplishment of the same schemes of subversion and conquest, which had been devised and pursued by their predecessors. Instead, therefore, of either accepting, or rejecting, the proffered terms, they had recourse to a measure as unprecedented as the whole of their conduct, and insisted that Lord Malmesbury should deliver in his *ultimatum* in four and twenty hours.

On this strange demand, Lord Malmesbury observed, that, insisting on that point in so peremptory a manner, before the two powers had communicated to each other their respective pretensions, and before the articles of the future treaty could be submitted to the discussions which the respective interests to be adjusted necessarily demanded, was to shut the door against all negotiation,—And that, certainly, was the intent of the demand, which the Directory knew, before they preferred it, neither would, nor could, be complied with.—His Lordship, however, expressed his readiness to enter into every explanation of which the state and progress of the negotiation might admit, or to discuss any counter-project which might be delivered to him, on the part of the Executive Directory, with that candour, and that spirit of conciliation, which corresponded with the just and pacific sentiments of his Court. But the Executive Directory, now pressed to a decision, and unable to continue the negotiation any longer, without some specific answer or proposal, immediately replied, in general terms, that they would listen to no proposals contrary to the laws, and to the treaties which bound the Republic;—at the same time, they ordered Lord Malmesbury to leave Paris in eight and forty hours, and the territory of the Republic with all possible expedition. Thus ended this attempt at negotiation, to which not the smallest hopes of success could possibly be attached by any person who had paid the least attention to the uniform conduct of the French government.—While the British Court were explicit in their

statement of terms, the French government studiously forbore either to enter into any discussion of those terms, for their rejection was general, or to give the smallest intimation of the conditions on which they would consent to restore peace to Europe. In fact, they were resolved to conclude no treaty, where they could not trace the conditions with the point of the sword, and to sign none but *separate* treaties of peace. This had been their uniform policy, and their constant conduct. It constituted part of the grand plan, for dismembering Europe, and for disjointing all the established systems and compacts, by which nations had hitherto been bound together, which the first adepts in Revolutionary Science, the Brissots, and the Condorcets, had suggested; to which their worthy rivals and successors, the Dantons, and the Robespierres, had pertinaciously adhered; and which the Directory themselves, who had been nursed in the same school, had adopted and cherished, with filial tenderness and affection. They felt bold in the progress of their arms in Italy, and, notwithstanding the checks which they had sustained in Germany, confident of the success of their great scheme, for forcing their way into the hereditary states of Austria, and of dictating peace at the gates of Vienna.—They had already imposed their own conditions on the Sardinian Monarch, whose tottering throne they had shaken to its basis; on the feeble Sovereign of Spain; on the Supreme Pontiff; and on all the minor Princes of Italy and the Empire. They had even forced Spain, now converted, through the weakness of her government, from an enemy capable of being formidable, into an abject tool of France, to declare war against Great Britain;—and the encouragement which they had received from their secret agents in Ireland and England, joined to their own gross ignorance of the real state and resources of both countries, led them to entertain the most sanguine hopes of raising a rebellion in the former, and, by the aid of a powerful body of French troops, now prepared to invade it, to effect its total separation from the latter.

Indeed, the Directory scarcely deigned to conceal these objects. Aware of the discontent which followed the rupture of the negotiation, and not so firmly settled on their seats, as to be without their fears as to its consequences, they published a proclamation, in which they threw

all the blame of the rupture on the British Cabinet, who had dared to propose to replace Europe in the same situation in which she stood before the war, and to call upon France tamely to forego all those claims to which the triumphs of her arms had given her so *reasonable* and *incontestible* a *right*. England was threatened with the vengeance of the Republic; and the French were exhorted to persevere, without remission, in the prosecution of a war, which could not fail to terminate gloriously for France, and to produce the humiliation of a foe, who presumed to dictate conditions to a State which had imposed its own terms on every other member of the coalition.

In this bombastic appeal to the vanity of the nation, the Directory cautiously avoided to mention the loss of her colonies in either India, or the generous offer of Great Britain to restore all her conquests, without any stipulation for herself, except what arose out of the interest which she had in common with her Allies. In fact, England stood in respect of France, in precisely the same situation in which France stood in respect of Austria. She had taken every thing from France, and France had taken nothing from her. According, therefore, to the principle assumed by the French themselves, that the conquering party had a right to dictate terms to the conquered, England had the same right to dictate terms to her, which she had to dictate terms to the Emperor. But the Directory admitted no reciprocity of rights or claims; they asserted the power of the sword, though it could not extend to England; and they silenced the voice of justice with the thunder of their cannon. The French proclamation was answered by a manifesto from the British Cabinet, (one of the most able and masterly productions to be found in the collection of British State Papers,)* in which the true motives, that actuated the conduct of his Majesty, were perspicuously and satisfactorily unfolded; the ambitious views, and designs, of the French government clearly developed; and the real causes of the rupture of the negotiation fully explained.

The new Parliament met before the negotiations at Paris were entered upon;—in the Speech from the Throne, on the Sixth of October,

* See Appendix (A.)

his Majesty informed the two Houses, that he was about to send a Minister to Paris; at the same time, that he called upon them to adopt the necessary measures for counteracting the declared intention of the enemy, to make a descent upon the British Coasts. Little debate occurred, in either House, on the motion for an address. The Opposition expressed their concurrence in that part of it which related to the approaching negotiation for peace; but, in the House of Lords, Earl Fitzwilliam, who was the disciple of Mr. Burke, and who had adopted all his sentiments, on the object of the war, and the end to which every effort of Ministers should be directed, opposed the address, because he disapproved of any negotiation, and considered it as improper to treat with France, until the Hereditary Monarchy of that country was restored. Impressed with this conviction, the noble Earl endeavoured to persuade the House, that the principle on which he had himself supported the war was that on which it had been really undertaken by the government. He took a comprehensive view of the gigantic ambition of the Rulers of the French Republic, and made many just and forcible remarks on the state of vassalage to which they had reduced the greater part of Europe. He anticipated the most fatal consequences from the conclusion of peace with the Regicidal government,—nothing less than the destruction of our Constitution, and the annihilation of our greatness and power. In conformity with these sentiments, his Lordship moved, as an amendment to the address, that the House should declare, that, strongly impressed with the justice and necessity of the present war, carried on for the maintenance of civil and moral order in the world, and for securing the balance of power in Europe, and the independence of all States, they would continue to give his Majesty a vigorous support in asserting the general cause of his Majesty and his Allies, and for preserving the good faith, dignity, and honour of the Crown, in full assurance that no steps would be taken inconsistent with those principles, or with the future safety and prosperity of these kingdoms. The amendment contained a further assurance, that the House would give a firm support to the King, in repelling the threatened aggressions of the Court of Madrid. Lord Grenville opposed the amendment, and entered into the same explanation of the object of the war which

had been frequently given before by Mr. Pitt. The amendment was rejected, and the address adopted without a division. Earl Fitzwilliam, however, availed himself of his privilege, and entered a protest against it, containing, substantially, the same sentiments which he had advanced in his speech.*

In the House of Commons, Mr. Fox congratulated himself on the adoption of a measure which he had long recommended, and which, in his opinion, might have been adopted, with an equal chance of success, at any period of the war, as at the present moment. He objected, however, to one part of the address, which expressed satisfaction *at the general tranquillity of the country.* He considered the assertion, that such tranquillity was owing to the wisdom and energy of the laws, including, of course, the two laws which he had so strongly opposed in the last Parliament, as totally untrue; he said, that if it was meant to be contended, that, generally, tranquillity had sprung out of these laws, *laws which ought to be the object of terror and abhorrence,* and which were calculated to excite those feelings, he could not rejoice in it.—It was a tranquillity which every man, who loved freedom, ought to see with pain, which every man, who loved order, ought to see with terror.—But Peace, Peace was, in his estimation, the panacea for every evil of the State. He had no difficulty, however, in asserting, that there were still great resources in the country, even in its present state, if the people were fairly and fully convinced that the blessings of peace were refused through the perverseness or ambition of France. He had no hesitation in saying, that if, after manifesting a disposition of candour, simplicity, and openness, in negotiating the terms of a peace, it should still appear that the French refused to accede to a just and reasonable peace, we not only should find ample resources in this country for prosecuting the war with vigour, but we should prosecute it with such an unanimity of heart, as would draw forth all the energy, and all the vigour, of the nation. He said thus much in the contemplation of a clear, candid, and manly procedure on the part of our Ministers; and he had no doubt but he should be cordially joined, by every part of the country, in the

* See Appendix (B.)

declaration, that, if they so conducted themselves, they would meet with universal support.*

This declaration called forth the warmest expressions of satisfaction from Mr. Pitt, who regarded the concurrence, now manifested, as the pledge of general unanimity, and the omen of great exertions, if, unfortunately, the grand object of peace should not be attained. Our situation, he said, held out to us a chance of peace, if the enemy were disposed to accede to it on just and reasonable terms; but, on the other hand, if they were still actuated by ambitious projects, another object would be gained by the course which had been pursued; they should unmask them in the eyes of Europe; they should expose the injustice of their policy, and their insatiable thirst of aggrandizement; and, if no other object were gained, they would, at least, be able to put to the proof the sincerity of the pledge which had been that day given, that, if the enemy were not disposed to accede to peace on just and reasonable terms, the war would be supported by the unanimous voice, and the collected force, of the nation.

Adverting to Mr. Fox's remarks, on the two laws supposed to be specially referred to in the address, Mr. Pitt observed, that if there were any ambiguity in the address respecting them, it was because they were so consistent with the spirit of the Constitution which they were framed to protect, and so blended with the system of our jurisprudence, so congenial to the practice of former times, and so conformable even to the letter of former acts, that it was impossible to make any discrimination. It was to be recollected, that they passed in a moment of turbulence and alarm; and that they had been found most admirably calculated to meet the emergency of the times. The address did not apportion, with minute exactness, what degree of tranquillity had been derived from the operation of those laws, when blended with the Constitution, and what might have been enjoyed from the influence of laws previously subsisting; how much we were indebted for protection to the ancient strength of

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, October 6, 1796, p. 42.

the edifice, and how much to those buttresses which were raised to support it in the moment of hurricane.

Mr. Pitt observed, that Mr. Fox had taken to himself all the merit of that policy which the Ministers had tardily adopted; and so confident did he feel himself in this ground of self-exultation, that he declined all illustration of his victory, and made it merely the subject of one triumphant remark,—"You are now taking those measures which, if you had listened to my councils, you might have adopted four years ago."—But did it follow, Mr. Pitt asked, that the measure was right then, because it was right now? Might not a period of four years produce many events to justify a material change of policy, and to render measures wise and expedient, which, at another time, would have been neither prudent nor reasonable? Because we did not chuse to make peace the day after an unprovoked aggression, might we not be justified in holding out pacific overtures after a lapse of four years? Mr. Fox's argument amounted to this—that, either peace must be made the day after the aggression, or not made at all.

The most flattering account was given, by Mr. Pitt, of the prosperity of the country. The state of our exports, during the six preceding months, had been equal to what they were in the most flourishing year of peace, 1792; and our foreign trade had even exceeded the produce of that year, which was the most productive of any in the history of the country.—The address was carried unanimously.

That part of the King's speech which related to the intended invasion of the country by the French, was taken into consideration on the 18th of October, when Mr. Pitt submitted to the House the outlines of a plan for the better defence of the country; by raising a supplementary militia of sixty thousand men, one-sixth of the number only to be called out to be trained at one time; twenty thousand fencible cavalry; and fifteen thousand men, to be raised in the different parishes, in proportion to their population, to be divided between the sea and the land service. Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Fox objected to an application of this nature, upon a general assertion in the King's speech, of the enemy's intention to

invade the country, without assigning any specific grounds for the belief that such intention existed. They did not, however, press for a division. The resolutions, proposed by Mr. Pitt, were carried unanimously; and, being reduced into the form of bills, passed into laws, after much discussion, and various modifications, before the close of the year.—A bill was afterwards introduced, by Mr. Dundas, for embodying a militia in Scotland, which passed without opposition. The whole force proposed to be maintained, for the service of the year 1797, amounted to one hundred and ninety-five thousand six hundred and ninety-four men for the land service; and a hundred and twenty thousand seamen and marines.

The expence attending the enlarged scale of preparation, which the circumstances of the times rendered necessary, amounted to no less than £42,786,000, for the year 1797.—To supply which, there were two loans, one, at the close of 1796, and the other in the subsequent spring. The first of these amounted to eighteen millions, and was denominated the *Loyalty Loan*, being raised by the voluntary subscriptions of loyal and well-disposed individuals;—the other, of thirteen millions, was raised in the usual way. The new taxes, imposed to defray the interest of this sum, in addition to the permanent sources of revenue, were upon tea, coffee, spirits, sugars, pepper, bricks, auctions, brimstone, starch, iron, sweet oil, staves, stamps, postage of letters, stage-coaches, inhabited houses, newspapers, advertisements, and some other articles.—The sum to be raised was so large, that it was impossible to avoid the imposition of taxes which would not be felt, more or less, by every class of the community. Indeed, few taxes can be greatly productive which are not laid on objects of general consumption.

While Mr. Pitt was employed in stating to the House the various particulars respecting the supplies, he noticed a circumstance which had occurred in the period between the dissolution of the old Parliament, and the meeting of the new one. The pressing exigencies of the Emperor had rendered it necessary to send him some immediate assistance, in order to enable him to carry on his military operations. Mr. Pitt expressed his conviction, that no man would be of opinion, that such

assistance, to a brave and faithful ally, which was requisite to preserve his independence, and to restore him to glory, should have been withholden. Ministers had thought proper to grant it, not ignorant of the responsibility which attached to their conduct, not forgetful of their own duty, nor fearful of the event. The sum advanced was about £1,200,000; and Mr. Pitt proposed, that the House should place sufficient confidence in Ministers to authorize them to make similar advances when called for by similar exigencies. And he submitted to the House the propriety of voting the sum of three millions.* Such a circumstance as this could not elude the vigilant patriotism of the Opposition. Mr. Grey, however, who attacked other parts of Mr. Pitt's statements, —strange to say,— wholly omitted to notice it. But Mr. Fox spoke of it as an offence of so gross a nature, as to call for the severest condemnation. He accused the Minister of having told the people of Great Britain, that he was a better judge than they, to whom their money, and how much of it, when and how, it should be disposed of, and given to any foreign Prince:—"If," said he, "these are the sentiments to be acted upon in this country; if the Minister be permitted to carry them into effect; I declare, for myself, that the constitution of this country is not worth fighting for. For this conduct, I say he ought to be impeached."† He adverted to the same subject on the following day. He considered the conduct of Mr. Pitt to be so gross, so flagrant, a violation of the constitution, that the House ought even to withhold the supplies, and, consequently, to put a stop to all the operations of the Government at the very moment when an invasion was expected, until sentence should be formally pronounced on the Minister. If he succeeded in his opposition to the supplies, Mr. Fox avowed his determination to move, on an early day, that his Majesty's Ministers, in granting a loan to the Emperor, without the consent of Parliament, had been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor. With his usual arrogance, he professed a contempt for the opinion of the House, in case it should be found, as he had good reason to expect, different from his own, in which event, *he hoped the subject would be taken up without doors*; that the people would, in every part of the country, express their abhorrence of the doctrine

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, December 7, 1796, p. 269.

† Idem Ibid. p. 288.

maintained by Mr. Pitt, and that the House would be obliged (he did not mean by force, but by the voice of the country) to assert those rights which had been tamely and pusillanimously surrendered. For his own part, he regarded it as a more serious attack upon the constitution of the country, than that which was conveyed through the writings of Paine, or of *any* man whatever. The nature of a libel was explained by its tendency to bring the constitution and government into contempt. Were he upon a jury, deciding upon any composition containing Mr. Pitt's speech of the preceding night, he would not hesitate a moment to pronounce it a libel upon the constitution. For if the doctrines laid down in it were constitutional, ours was a most vile and detestable constitution. Even after all the attacks which had been made upon it, and all the wounds which it had received, they should have still shed their blood in its defence; but if this new defalcation were to be added to what they were formerly robbed of, he should wish to know what there was left to interest their feelings, or to excite their exertions? This would, indeed, be an incalculable addition to all the woes and calamities which the war had induced: and if, after what they had lost in money, in reputation, and in blood, they were also to submit to this oppression, the House of Commons was no longer to be considered as a branch of the constitution; and there would be little in our government to distinguish it from that of absolute monarchies.*

In answer to these strong animadversions, and to this funeral oration on the departed constitution, it was observed by Mr. Pitt, that they who never before had an opportunity of hearing the speeches which Mr. Fox had been accustomed to deliver, and of observing the line of argument which he had been accustomed to employ upon every public question which had been agitated in that House, would certainly have supposed, on the present occasion, that now, for the first time in his life, he had felt real alarm for the liberties and constitution of his country; and, for the first time, a point had occurred so intimately connected with the preservation of their political rights, that, in the case of a decision, hostile to the opinion which he held, it was to be vindicated by nothing less than an appeal to the people. But it had happened to those who had

* Woodfall's Reports, December 8, p. 360, 361.

often had occasion to attend to Mr. Fox, to hear the same danger represented, and the same consequences applied. It was not once, twice, or thrice, that he had reprobated, with the same emphasis, stigmatized with the same epithets, and denounced, as pregnant with ruin to the liberties of the country, measures which it had been thought necessary to bring forward, and which Parliament, in its wisdom, had thought proper to adopt. Nor was it the first time that Mr. Fox, and his political associates, had made a stand behind *the last* dike of the constitution. It was not, he repeated, the first, the second, nor the third time, that, upon points which a great majority of the House, and of the country, had deemed to be connected with the preservation of their dearest interests, Mr. Fox had raised the cry of alarm, and in which he had affected to see the downfall of the constitution, and the destruction of our liberties. Not many months even had elapsed, since he had stated, with the same confidence, and urged with the same fervour, that the liberties of England would be annihilated, and its constitution gone, if certain bills, then pending, should pass into laws;—they did pass, and Mr. Pitt affirmed, that a vast majority of the people of the country agreed, that the substantial blessings of their free government had been preserved, and the designs of their enemies hitherto frustrated, by them. Nay, not many hours had elapsed, since Mr. Fox had given a two-months notice of his intention to move the repeal of those acts, which he once represented as a grievance under which he could not sleep. There was, indeed, something striking, something peculiarly singular, in the manner in which this new constitutional light had broken in upon him. The declaration which had infused so deadly an alarm into his mind, the declaration by which the constitution had been annihilated, was made the day before. It was admitted to have been made in a way the most clear and distinct; indeed, so clear as to magnify the danger, and to aggravate the offence. The declaration which Mr. Fox now felt to be so fatal to the liberties of the country, so repugnant to the principles of the constitution, as to render it incumbent upon him to make it the ground of an extraordinary proceeding, and the reason of signal animadversion upon the Minister, did not strike him, at the moment of its delivery, as of so much importance as immediately to call him up. It did not inspire, with any particular sensation, his honourable friend, Mr. Grey, a gentleman, by nature, not free from

jealousy, and of a vigilance which it was not easy to elude;—it had not, however, drawn from him the smallest remark of any kind that could expose the danger with which it was pregnant, or betray the feeling which it was calculated to excite. It never disturbed the serenity of his temper, though, perhaps, not the least liable to irritation, nor had it prevented him from laying before the House the details of his various calculations with the most calm and placid equanimity, the very moment after he had witnessed the death-wound of the constitution! After an interval of debate, it had deranged none of his calculations, it had not driven out of his head his reasonings on the *three per cents.* nor his premeditated remarks on the navy-debt, nor yet a single circumstance of objection, which the survey of the subject had presented, nor had it deterred him from allowing the resolutions to be carried with an unanimous voice! But after Mr. Fox had slept upon the subject, he discovered, that the speech which had been received the day before, in the manner stated, contained principles of such dreadful tendency, and threatened consequences of such fatal operation, as to lead him to propose not merely a censure of the doctrine, not merely the reprobation of the particular measure, not merely the punishment of the person by whom it was uttered; but as induced him, in the first instance, to take revenge for the error, or the guilt, of a Minister, by giving his negative to the whole resolutions, which had no relation to the subject, as would prompt him to suspend those supplies which would give authority to the negotiations for peace; or, in case of being reduced to that alternative, impart energy to the operations of war; as would induce him to tell the enemy, by the very next post, by which the unanimous determination of Parliament to provide for every situation would be conveyed, that the House of Commons had interfered to stop the effect of their former decision, had suspended the means that were to add weight to the exertions of the Executive Government, and, at so critical a moment of the negotiation, had committed the interests of this country, and of her Allies, and flattered the hopes, and raised the pretensions, of the enemy. Such was the length to which Mr. Fox's proposition went.—It was not to remedy the imputed crime which had been committed, nor to guard against the chance of its future occurrence; but it was calculated to derange every measure which might be in train, and every design which might be in

contemplation. Mr. Pitt, however, expressed his hope, that when the gentleman had viewed the subject with more deliberation, when he had again slept upon his wrath, he would recur to that coolness which he had at first displayed, aud that his vehemence and alarm would subside.

In answer to Mr. Fox's threat of moving the House to impeach Ministers, Mr. Pitt said, there was one thing which he would intreat of him, and he might be assured, that it was the only supplication that he would address to him on the subject, and that was, that if he could prove to the House that he had violated the constitution, and had committed the crime of which he had been accused, Mr. Fox would not defer a single moment to put his threat in execution; that he would limit his efforts to that object, and that he would not combine with the vengeance he pursued, a measure which involved the ruin of his country. Let the punishment, destined for Ministers, light upon themselves alone, and let the consequences of the measures, which they adopted to avert the dangers which threatened their country, the means which they employed for the safety, for the salvation, of Europe, rest upon themselves. Thus much Mr. Pitt addressed to his political adversary, not from personal considerations, nor did he solicit the boon as a matter of personal indulgence; his request was solely founded in public motives.

Having thus exposed the conduct of the Opposition, in the mode of bringing forward the question, Mr. Pitt proceeded to justify the measure which had incurred such severity of censure, though he doubted whether, as it was reserved for particular discussion, he ought, in strict propriety, to utter a word upon it at present.—He admitted the justice of the general principle, laid down by Mr. Fox, that the House of Commons possessed the power of controlling the public expenditure; but he contended that, like most other general principles, it was subject to limitation in practice. At every period since the commencement of the æra, to which we refer for the pure practice of the constitution, in the best and most glorious æras in the History of our government, the principle of *extraordinaries* had been not merely received for individual expences, but recognized upon general views. It had prevailed under every administration, even under those with which Mr. Fox himself had been connected, during the three last reigns, and in the most

approved periods of liberty and the constitution. Mr. Fox, then, held this principle without exception, while the practice of every government proved that it was always limitted; and his whole argument was applicable to all the extraordinaries that ever were voted by Parliament. It was impossible, therefore, that he could have correctly stated—Mr. Pitt could scarcely think that he had *sincerely* stated—this argument which his experience must disavow, and which his knowledge must inform him, was neither consistent with the principles of the constitution, nor with its practice, at periods which deserved to be followed as examples.

Having stated the general nature of the question, Mr. Pitt considered it in a more confined point of view.—He asked Mr. Fox, whether it had ever occurred to him, that Parliament had sometimes committed to his Majesty, not new, but special, powers, which superseded all general principles. In point of fact, such discretionary power had been expressly committed to his Majesty.

He here adverted to the King's message of the 8th of December, 1795, and to the consequent act of Parliament, granting a vote of credit to the amount of two millions and a half; by which it appeared, that a power was given to his Majesty, to apply the sum contained in the vote of credit as the exigencies of the State might require.* Let the case be supposed, (which would not be a less suitable illustration, because it approached the fact) that powers had been conferred to give that assistance to the allies of this country, which our own interest, and the circumstances of their situation required, could any man doubt that the Minister, who should have hesitated to issue that sum, which, if granted, might have enabled our Allies to maintain their own cause, and

* The words of the message were, "his Majesty recommends it to this House, to consider of making provision towards enabling his Majesty *to defray any extraordinary expences which may be incurred for the service of the ensuing year; and to take such measures as the exigencies of affairs may require.*" Here the greatest possible latitude, in the application of the money to be voted, was recommended; and, as the recommendation was adopted, of course given. Mr. Grey, himself, at the time, stated the object of a vote of credit to be, "to enable the Executive Power to meet expences unforeseen and unprovided for." And Mr. Fox, on the same occasion, observed, "Votes of credit were not intended to supply the deficiency of estimates, but merely to answer unforeseen occurrences, in the absence of Parliament."

to defend the safety of Europe,—and who should have allowed the enemies of Austria to complete her destruction by withholding a seasonable supply, would have been a traitor to his country, and would have merited the severest punishment? The vote of credit of the preceding year did actually invest the Executive Government with a discretionary power, of applying the sum granted in such manner as might best suit the public exigencies, and the money applied to the service of the Emperor was within the amount of the grant. He did not mean to say, that the discretion thus vested in the Crown was absolute, and independent of the controul of Parliament, or, that the Minister who exercised it in an improper manner was exempted from censure; but he should shew in what manner he understood this limitation when called upon to make his defence. He declared, that, whatever might be the issue of the discussion, he would rather be convicted of having acted a principal part in the measure of granting a supply, by which the salvation of Austria was secured, and the independence of Europe was maintained, than be acquitted for withholding that aid, by which the cause of our allies was sacrificed, and the general interests of mankind compromised.

It was remarked by Mr. Fox, in explanation, that extraordinaries were, in some measure, inevitable; but they were an evil which ought not to be extended beyond the necessity, and it was criminal to resort to this expedient when other means might be employed. A similar opinion was maintained by Sir William Pulteney, who thought that it was never intended that subsides to foreign powers should be supplied by a vote of credit. Mr. Grey, who had been perfectly silent and passive, when the subject was first noticed, now followed the steps of his leader, accused himself of the political sin of *omission*, the preceding night, and inveighed most bitterly against the Minister, for this alledged breach of the constitution. Mr. Wilberforce, on the other hand, thought the Minister fully justified, by the pressing urgency of the occasion, in advancing the money to the Emperor, and that no charge of intention to injure the constitution could possibly attach to him. He observed, that he did not expect any candour from the opposite side of the House. They had uniformly inveighed against Ministers with as little candour as

moderation; with as little sincerity as truth. The speeches of Mr. Fox might do well enough to inflame our domestic, and to embolden our foreign, enemies; but on the minds of a sober House of Commons, they could have no such effect. The impeachment of Ministers was a favourite topic with some people, but in this instance they had not deserved censure, but praise. Gentlemen might rant about the excellencies, the wounds, and the death, of the constitution; but they ought to know, that those to whom they addressed their *medley effusions* were more sincerely the supporters of freedom than they.* Mr. Fox's attempt to stop the supplies was rendered abortive by the good sense of the House, 164 members of which voted against his motion, and only 58 for it.

The subject was revived on the fourteenth of December, when Mr. Fox made it the ground of a specific charge against the Minister. On that occasion, he entered upon a full investigation of the measure, repeated all his former censures, and considered the constitution as annihilated, unless the House should join him in reprobating the conduct of Ministers, who were not deserving of an act of indemnity, as they had no circumstances of alleviation to urge in their own behalf. He concluded with moving, "That his Majesty's Ministers, having authorized and directed, at different times, without the consent, and during the sitting of Parliament, the issue of various sums of money, for the service of his Imperial Majesty, and also for the service of the army under the Prince of Condé, have acted contrary to their duty, and to the trust reposed in them, and have thereby violated the constitutional privileges of this House." This motion was seconded by Mr. Combe, an Alderman of the City of London, in obedience to the orders of his constituents, who had assembled in their Common Hall that day, for the purpose of giving their opinions on a question, which they were so well qualified to discuss.

Mr. Pitt vindicated his conduct with a degree of seriousness, and solemnity, suited to the weight of the charge, and the importance of

* Woodfall's Reports, December 30, 1796, p. 315.

the questions which it involved.—He commented on the servile obedience of Mr. Combe, to the orders of his constituents, observing, that there was not, perhaps, any question on which a member of Parliament ought to allow the decided dictates of his own conscience and judgment to be superseded by the instructions of his constituents; but if there were any case in which a member ought to be particularly anxious to preserve his right of private judgment, it was in the present instance, in which a criminal charge was the subject for consideration; for he thought it must be admitted, that it was impossible for the Alderman's constituents to decide, in a just and candid manner, on the propriety of giving a vote on a motion, with the particulars of which they must have been unacquainted, and more particularly as they must have been totally ignorant of the defence which his Majesty's Ministers meant to set up.

It was rather extraordinary that a member, who proclaimed himself the champion of the constitution, and who stood forward to claim compensation for the damages which it had received, by an infraction of it on the part of Ministers, should himself be so grossly ignorant of the constitutional character, and duty, of a representative, as to suppose that he was bound to obey the instructions of his immediate constituents, instead of acting, to the best of his judgment and conscience, for the general good of the country; and as not to know, that the moment he was returned to Parliament, he ceased to be the organ of a Common Hall of the City of London, and became a representative of the aggregate body of the people of England. But a *civic* education is not the best calculated to lay the foundation of constitutional knowledge, or to convey the most correct notions of Parliamentary duty.

After this gentle admonition to Mr. Combe, Mr. Pitt proceeded to examine the arguments of Mr. Fox.—While Mr. Fox himself was in administration, extraordinaries, to a large amount, had been used during the sitting of Parliament, and Parliament justified the act by a vote.—Yet did Mr. Fox condemn, in the Ministers, the very act which, when a Minister, he committed himself. Mr. Pitt admitted, that, according to the fundamental principles of the constitution, all grants must proceed from the Commons; that they were afterwards subject to their controul,

was a principle undeniable;—but, although the Commons were possessed of the power of controlling the supplies raised by them, yet it was a circumstance proved to demonstration, by practice and general observation, that it would be impossible to carry on any wars, that it would be impossible for government to proceed, with due regard for the public safety, or with advantage to the public service, if extraordinaries were not raised by Parliament. He then shewed, that it had been the uniform practice of every administration, from the Revolution to that time, to have recourse to extraordinaries. He observed, that our constitution rested on great and leading principles, but still no one would wish that it should sustain any injury by pushing those principles to a rigid and extreme excess. If we were to look into the record books of the constitution, we should find certain principles laid down, which seemed to contradict many acts of Parliament, which were held as strictly legal. If we examined the law of Parliament, we should find that it was derived, principally, from the general tenour of the whole of the principles of the constitution, illustrated by the particular urgency and necessity of circumstances. If this were the true way in which men ought to study the constitution, by applying the principles of it to the exigency of circumstances, how could that measure be deemed unconstitutional which was adopted in conformity to the best and most approved principles, as adapted to peculiar events? How could an act deserve to be loaded with obloquy and reproach, which, in truth, it had been the practice of every administration to commit, at those periods when we had boasted most of the excellence of our constitution?

But it was not only the question of extraordinaries that was to be examined;—Parliament, finding it impossible to reduce every thing to estimated expences, had introduced the practice of giving votes of credit, with the power, generally, to apply them as exigencies might require.

Mr. Pitt had endeavoured, as far as possible, to provide against extraordinaries; but it had been found impracticable to dispense with them wholly.—And Parliament had exhibited a great proof of its wisdom in not interfering with respect to the amount of the sums, which Ministers might think necessary for supplying the extraordinaries, but

merely making them responsible for the application of the money, and the necessity of the extraordinary service to which it was appropriated. He considered a vote of credit to be a privilege granted to his Majesty's Ministers, to employ a given sum for any such purpose as the exigency of affairs might require. There was no circumstance, however unforeseen, there was no purpose, be it what it might, no possible event, to which Ministers might not think it requisite that a vote of credit should be applicable; no expences, upon sudden emergencies, which did not come within the spirit of a vote of credit. But Ministers were responsible to Parliament for the exercise of the discretion vested in them by the act, founded on a vote of credit, in the same manner, and to the same extent, as for the exercise of every other kind of discretion, which permanently belonged to them, as Ministers of the Crown, and which they were bound to use for the safety, the welfare, and the dignity, of the country: a discretion the more important as it related to the disposition of the public money; and Mr. Pitt trusted that Parliament would not forget that it was their duty to weigh those unforeseen difficulties, in which alone government could use the powers with which it was entrusted.

But Mr. Pitt carried the doctrine of responsibility still further.—He admitted that government was liable to be questioned for the propriety of the measures to which it might think proper to recur; he admitted, also, that if, at the time of using a vote of credit, Ministers foresaw any expenditure which appeared likely to be of consequence, either from its amount, or from the importance, or peculiarity, of the subject, if it admitted of a precise estimate, and if the subject were of such a nature that it could be divulged, without injury or inconvenience to the public, he would fail in his duty to Parliament, and would not act according to the sound principles of what he believed to be the constitution of the country, if he were not to state the nature of the emergency, and endeavour to estimate the expence. But if, from the nature of the exigency, it should be impolitic to divulge it, he conceived the Minister justified who concealed it from Parliament till a future season. Upon these principles, as to the general question, Mr. Pitt was satisfied that his merits or demerits should be tried; if he had, in the opinion of the House, departed from the principles of the constitution, then he had committed an error in judgment;—if, through an error in judgment, he had departed from the principles of

the constitution, he admitted that he ought to receive the censure of the House, notwithstanding that error proceeded from his having felt it to be his irresistible duty, in common with the rest of his Majesty's Ministers, to act upon principles which he conceived the best calculated to ensure the prosperity and advantage of the country.

Having justified the general principle on which he had acted, he came to consider the particular measure to which it had been applied.—As to the utility of the advance to the Emperor, whether it could have been made in a more proper form,—whether, by a previous application to Parliament, it would not have been attended with a greater degree of inconvenience,—whether the advance was not made at a time the most critical that could possibly have occurred,—these were the questions which he proceeded briefly to discuss. He called upon the House to look back to the state of things on the Continent, in the month of July, or August, in the preceding year; a period when they saw, with regret and apprehension, the triumphant arms of the French Republic at the gates of Munich, and the territorial possessions of the powers opposed to France in danger of being wrested from them.—When they looked back to this period, let them, at the same time, contemplate the slow, firm, measured, and magnanimous, retreat of the gallant Austrian army, and the consequences which followed from a retreat, only calculated to ensure the success of their future operations.—Would they then ask themselves, dry as the question might be, when so animated a subject was presented to the mind, how far the assurance of the aid which this country was disposed to grant, might have invigorated the spirit of a nation exerting its utmost efforts to resist an invading foe, how far it might have given confidence to their resources, and enabled them to prosecute that line of operations which had been attended with such distinguished success? With these considerations in his view, was there any man, he asked, who could regard, as a matter of consequence, whether the expence of £900,000, or £1,200,000, had been incurred by the country? Was there any man who could question the propriety of the sum allotted for the object, and would be willing, for the sake of so paltry a saving, to give up our share in promoting a service which had terminated so honourably for the character of our allies, and so beneficially for the general interest of Europe? Who would not rejoice that he was admit-

ted into partnership so illustrious, and accompanied with such brilliant success?

——————————— Me credite Lesbon,
Me Tenedon, Chrysenque, et Cyllan Apollinis urbes,
Et Scyron cepisse. Meâ concussa putate
Procubuisse solo Lyrnessia mœnia dextrâ.

The money, Mr. Pitt observed, was not given as a subsidy, but advanced as a loan; and that opinion of the public, which had been so often alluded to, in the course of this debate, was, he had no doubt, decidedly in favour of the measure. There was not, he believed, an Englishman who did not most ardently sympathize with the magnanimity, the resources, the spirit, and the perseverance, which had been displayed by Austria in her recent exertions, and who did not rejoice that the contributions of England had been brought forward in aid of operations which had been equally marked by their gallantry and success. He would not think so ill of the good sense of his countrymen, as to suppose that they could regret any trifling expence, which had been the means of obtaining such signal advantages.—The only question was, whether there was any doubt of the exigency of the measure, whether there was any doubt of its necessity, and whether the service would have been performed by a previous application to Parliament.

He reminded the House, that, at the time he applied for a vote of credit, he had expressly referred to a loan, then in contemplation, to a much larger amount, for the purpose of affording the necessary assistance to the Emperor. It was stated at the time, that the precise period at which it would be wanted was uncertain, as it depended on the result of an intercourse between his Majesty and the Emperor. It must have been evident, therefore, that the vote of credit was moved with the view of applying it in the manner in which it was applied. Mr. Pitt, however, was aware that, in consequence of the drain of money, some time must elapse before the influx of trade would be such as to render a loan practicable in its execution, or safe in its impression; for of all subjects, that which related to credit, or the stagnation of money, the delicacy of which every man knew, was that which required particular circumspection. He had thought, however, that a much shorter period would have

sufficed for the removal of the existing scarcity; but, having been deceived in his expectations, he deemed it advisable to take the step which was now the subject of discussion, a short time previous to the dissolution of the last Parliament.—The first principle of his defence, therefore, was this—that when the campaign was advancing, so that the Emperor could not wait for any proof of the reality of his hopes of an increase of pecuniary supply, in conformity with what had been done before, and according to principles recognized by Parliament, Mr. Pitt thought it expedient, for the success of the Imperial arms, to send him the means of repelling the enemy.

He next proceeded to consider, whether the advance so made to the Emperor had produced greater embarrassment than it would have produced if made some months before, if a loan had been made. He avowed his belief that the situation of the mercantile world, and the pecuniary state of the country, were more favourable at this time, than they were at the periods when the several remittances were issued to the Emperor. The contractors for the last loan had apprized Mr. Pitt of the inconveniences which had resulted to commerce, in general, from the immense, but necessary, drains in the money market, and they had felt, that any specific proposition to guarantee a fresh loan to the Emperor would have sensibly affected that market, would have depreciated the funds, and depressed the public credit. Had he, under these circumstances, proposed a public loan; had he gone to Parliament, when Parliament first sat to deliberate on public measures; had he, while the necessities of the Empire, and the dearest interests of Europe, depended, in some degree, the one for relief, the other for preservation, on the remittance of certain portions of that sum of £1,200,000; had he, at that eventful crisis, done any thing that might, in its ultimate consequences, increase the difficulties of that ally, and endanger the liberties of Europe, what would have been the language of Mr. Fox, who had, that night, censured his conduct, and made it the subject of a specific motion?

He repeated, that, in the opinion of those most conversant with the state of the money market, the most alarming embarrassment would have been produced by the adoption of a different line of conduct.—

They felt the inconveniences necessarily attendant upon a state of warfare; but they more than felt the justice of the contest which had produced them. They thought that the pecuniary situation of the country was such as would have rendered the public avowal of any loan to the Emperor extremely impolitic, and that, by an ill-timed discussion of its propriety, it would have produced those evils which he had, in part, detailed. To them he submitted whether a public loan would be prudent in such circumstances; but they were unanimous in their preference of the adopted mode. This was a proof that he could have no intention to violate the Constitution. But he had not hastily and immaturely adopted the alternative; that he made these preliminary arrangements; that his inquiries on the subject were as general and earnest as had now been avowed, was well known, not only to the individuals with whom he consulted, but also to his colleagues in the Ministry. He appealed, without fear of contradiction, to those in his confidence, whether such was, or was not, his conduct on that occasion? At that time, too, the situation of the Empire was so peculiar, that his Majesty's servants could not but have a strong and *influencing* sense of the impropriety of affording publicly the aid which that situation so imperatively required. The arms of the French were victorious in almost every quarter; the Empire was threatened with destruction, and Europe with ruin. The treasury of the Empire was exhausted, and many of her Princes had been forced to abandon her defence. It was at this conjuncture that his Majesty's servants, faithful, at least, to their sense of the danger, afforded to Germany that assistance which, he was proud to say, had been, in a great measure, the means of saving not only that particular country, but a vast portion of Europe. Actuated by these considerations, hurried on by existing necessities, to adopt a particular measure, he flattered himself that it would ultimately be acknowledged, that the act itself, even supposing it to be unconstitutional, could not be the result of a deliberate intention to violate acts of Parliament.

The resolution to perform this act had not been taken without serious contemplation of the risk; nor yet without maturely considering every relation in which it could possibly connect itself with the Constitution.—It was not taken in defiance of law, nor made a solitary excep-

tion to all former usage. It was not taken to cripple our finances, nor had it, either prospectively, or retrospectively, any one thing in common with a deliberate insult to the House. But it was taken in a way, and upon an emergency, which warranted the measure. Mr. Pitt expressed his conviction, that had Parliament been acquainted with the danger of Austria, and had even determined to give the necessary assistance, the publicity of the measure would have defeated the object. The effect of a knowledge of the pecuniary distress of the Emperor, joined to the difficulty which a prompt supply would have produced, could not fail to bear, with peculiarly embarrassing weight, on the course of exchange. Whereas the transmission of £1,200,000, in different sums, and at different periods, tended greatly to relieve the Emperor, and to preserve the credit of the country from that depression, which the same sum, granted at once, and in the form of a public loan, would have occasioned.

The acts thus performed had been performed distinctly in compliance with solemn engagements; they were acts, in execution of pledges which had been previously given.—Acting, during the recess, from the conviction that those pledges were given by the letter and the spirit of existing treaties; acting, after the Parliament had met, under the sanction of those treaties, with no intention then, and surely with none now, of setting up their own judgment as the standard of, or superior to, the judgment of the House of Commons, Ministers, Mr. Pitt thought, might be permitted to avail themselves of the examples of all similar treaties in favour of similar conduct. As to the transaction itself, no line of separation could fairly be drawn between the necessity which gave existence to the measure, and the motives which influenced its adoption.—If the sense of Parliament could have been taken, there was no doubt that they must have given their sanction to the assistance afforded to the Emperor; but what had been done, had been done, in a great measure, before Parliament could have been assembled, to consider its expediency. Mr. Pitt having thus stated to the House the circumstances of that situation, which rendered it impossible for Austria to continue her warlike operations without assistance from this country; having endeavoured to render his own conceptions of the act of sending money to an Ally, without the previous consent of Parliament, manifest; and having

submitted to the House those principles, in the practical exertion of which he had pursued that line of conduct which was now so loudly condemned by Mr. Fox; he felt that he should be wanting in duty to himself, if he did not desire the House to compare those principles with his conduct.

As to the question of extraordinaries, the idea had been suggested, and something like an argument attempted to be deduced from it, that, if its spirit were adhered to, no part of a vote of credit could be employed to pay foreign troops; it had also been said, that, of such an application of public money so voted, our annals scarcely afforded any, and if any, not apposite, examples. Mr. Pitt, however, undertook to produce precedents in point, instances in which votes of credit had been appropriated, by our ancestors, to the payment of foreign troops. Previous to the revolution, this very thing had been done by the Crown; but in subsequent periods, in periods not the least favoured in our annals, although not altogether free from the stains of calumny, and party-violence; in the reign of King William, in the year 1701, accompanied by circumstances of a singularly important and curious nature, the Parliament voted an extra sum for the payment of foreign forces. This sum was voted not regularly as a vote of credit, but it succeeded the grant of a vote of credit, and was a measure which, although it incurred some trifling opposition, was carried unanimously. Such was the conduct of our ancestors at the period of the revolution. In the reign of Queen Anne, in the years 1704 and 1705, both subsidies and grants had been employed in the payment of foreign forces, and without the authority of Parliament. In 1706, a transaction, more directly characteristic of that for which the Ministers of the present day were now censured, was publicly avowed, and as publicly discussed; yet it seemed that Mr. Fox had overlooked it, because, if he had known it, he certainly ought to have abandoned his assertion. There appeared, in the annals of the Parliament of that day, an account of three different sums, each considered, by the Opposition, as a violation of the constitution;—they were transmitted to the Duke of Savoy, to the Emperor, and to Spain. A sum, too, had been paid, in the same manner, to the Landgrave of Hesse, for a corps of his troops, then in the pay of England. These sums were not voted regularly after

specific propositions, submitted for that purpose to the House, but were advanced to those Sovereigns, without the previous consent of Parliament. Not even estimates of the services, for which the sums had been paid, were laid before the House, till six weeks after its meeting. The sum transmitted to the Emperor was distinguished by peculiar circumstances. It had been sent, not at the close, not during the recess, of that session in which it was at first announced to Parliament, but before the end of the preceding session. These proceedings did certainly attract notice. The House of Commons, and the public, had been addressed on the unconstitutional nature of the measure; then, as now, every effort which ingenuity could suggest had been employed; every vehicle of public communication had been rendered a vehicle of asperity and censure on the conduct of Ministers. It became the subject of a solemn discussion,—a discussion, apparently, not less vehement than it was laboured and diffuse. But how did the Ministers of that day retire from the combat? Did they retire, overwhelmed with the virulence and abuse of the violent, with the censure of the discerning, and the reproof of the temperate, members of that Parliament? Or were their actions distinguished by the approbation of the Commons of Great Britain;—The Minister of that day had the satisfaction to see the attack of his adversaries repelled, and their expressions of censure changed to applause. That Minister heard his conduct approved, and the journals of the House were made to bare record, that the sense of its members was, that the sums advanced to the Emperor, on that occasion, had been not only productive of the preservation of the empire, but had also supported and maintained the interests of Europe. In the year 1718, at the beginning of the reign of George the First, another instance of the application of the public money occurred, though not so analogous as that just noticed. A message had been received from his Majesty, soliciting the aid of the Commons, to make such an augmentation of the actual forces of the country as might be deemed necessary to place it in a respectable state of defence; because there had been an apparent intention to invade the country.—At this time the King took Dutch troops into his pay, and the money voted to raise and maintain native troops was disbursed for the use of a foreign corps. In the year 1734, a general vote of credit was granted and applied, on such occasions, and for such purposes, as

might, at any time, during its existence, arise out of the exigencies of the time. On the 18th of February, in the following year, another vote of credit was granted, and a treaty concluded with Denmark;—and both these votes were applied to purposes, in their nature, not unlike those to which necessity led the Ministers of the present day to apply the vote of 1796. An advance to the Duke of Arenberg, commander of the Austrian forces, in the year 1742, was noticed in debate, and censured in the administration of Mr. Pelham,—a name as dear to the friends of constitutional liberty, perhaps, as any that could be mentioned;—but the enquiry was avoided by moving the previous question. It happened, however, that, not long after, the same question was made the subject of a specific discussion. It appeared, that the advance had been made under the authority of an assurance expressed by Lord Carteret, and not in consequence of any previous consent of Parliament; but it appeared, also, that the progress of the Austrian troops was considerably accelerated by the influence of that aid, and their subsequent successes chiefly owing to it. The vote of censure, therefore, which had been founded on the act of Lord Carteret was amended, and the advance declared necessary to the salvation of the Empire.—In 1787, the expences incurred by our endeavours to protect Holland were placed under the head of secret services, and without the smallest objection being started; and this was an unanimous recognition of the act, which, had it been the offspring of 1796, Mr. Fox, influenced by his new opinions, would, no doubt, have marked with his disapprobation.

In fact, the Opposition had not discovered that the act which they had loaded with every species of obloquy of which language was capable, was an act which had been again and again approved. It was even within the admitted principle of successive Parliaments. But the members who had sat in the last Parliament had not forgotten, that, when a loan of four milions and a half was proposed to be granted to the Emperor, the intention of granting that loan was known as early as February 1795. A message had been received from his Majesty, stating, that a negotiation was pending with the Emperor to maintain 200,000 men; and the loan was to be granted when the negotiation should be brought to a successful issue. Soon after the answer to this message was

communicated to the Throne, a motion was made for an account of £250,000, advanced to the Emperor in May, 1795; and again a similar motion was made, for an account of £300,000, also advanced to the Emperor in the month of May following. With respect to these sums, it was agreed by the House, before the loan was debated, that they might be afterwards made good out of the loan.—After the negotiation was concluded, the loan was debated; the House was divided, but no objection was made to these advances. As to the sums advanced to the Prince of Condè's army, they had hitherto been only paid to it for services rendered, as forming a part of the Austrian forces.

After having considered and examined the serious accusation, preferred by his opponents, in every possible point of view, he asked, on what principle of justice he could be rendered the object of a criminal charge for merely having followed the uniform tenour of precedent, and the established line of practice? By what interpretation of a candid and liberal mind could he be judged guilty of an attempt wantonly to violate the constitution? He appealed to Mr. Fox himself, who was not the last to contend for the delicacy which ought to be used in imputing criminal motives to any individual, and to urge, in the strongest terms, the attention which ought to be shown to the candid and impartial administration of justice. "In what country," exclaimed Mr. Pitt, "do we live? and by what principles are we to be tried?—By the maxims of natural justice, and constitutional law, or by what new code of some revolutionary tribunal?"—Not longer than eighteen months before, the same principle had been adopted, and suffered to pass without any animadversion; and now, at a crisis of tenfold importance, and where the measure had not outrun the exercise of a sound discretion, it was made the foundation of a criminal charge. The Ministers were accused of a direct and wanton attack on the constitution. It was not supposed that they had been actuated by any but the blackest and most malignant motives. They were not allowed the credit of having felt any zeal for the interest of the country, nor of those advantages which the measure had produced to the common cause.

Mr. Pitt concluded his defence with the following animated appeal

to the House:—"I have now weighed the whole merits of the transaction before the House, and with them I am well content to leave the decision. While we claim a fair construction of the principles and intentions which have guided our conduct, if it shall appear that, in the smallest instance, we have deviated from any constitutional principle, we must submit to the consequence, whatever be the censure or the punishment. It is our duty, according to the best of our judgment, to consult the interest of the country; it is your sacred and peculiar trust to preserve, inviolate, the principles of the constitution. I throw myself upon your justice, prepared, in every case, to submit to your decision; but with considerable confidence that I shall experience your approbation. If I should be disappointed, I will not say that the disappointment will not be heavy, and the mortification severe; at any rate, however, it will be to me matter of consolation, that I have not, from any apprehension of personal consequences, neglected to pursue that line of conduct which I conceive to be essential to the interests of the country, and of Europe. But while I bow, with the most perfect submission, to the determination of the House, I cannot but remark on the extraordinary language which has been used on the question. Ministers have been broadly accused of a wanton, and a malignant desire, to violate the Constitution;—it has been stated, that no other motive could possibly have actuated their conduct. If a charge of such malignant intention had been brought against men, who have affirmed the present war to be neither just nor necessary, and who, on that ground, cannot be supposed friendly to its success; who have extolled, nay, even exulted in, the prodigies of French valour; who have gloried in the victories of the foes of civil liberty,—the hostile disturbers of the peace of Europe,—men who blasphemously denied the existence of the Deity, and who had rejected, and trampled on, every law, moral and divine; who have exclaimed against the injustice of bringing to trial persons who had associated to overcome the legislature; those who, gravely and vehemently, asserted, that it was a question of prudence, rather than a question of morality, whether an act of the legislature should be resisted; those who were anxious to expose, and to aggravate, every defect of the Constitution; to reprobate every measure adopted for its preservation; and to obstruct every proceeding of the Executive Government to ensure

the success of the contest in which we are engaged in common with our allies;—I say, if such a charge of deliberate and deep-rooted malignity were brought against persons of this description, I should conceive that, even then, the rules of candid and charitable interpretation would induce us to hesitate in admitting its justice, much more when it is brought against individuals, whose conduct, I trust, has exhibited the reverse of the picture which I have now drawn. I appeal to the justice of the House, I rely on their candour; but, to gentlemen who can suppose Ministers capable of those motives which have been imputed to them on this occasion, it must be evident that I can desire to make no such appeal."*

Seldom has a more serious charge been preferred against a Minister; and never was any charge met with more candour, examined with more ability, or repelled with more success. In transmitting money to the Emperor, under the circumstances stated, Mr. Pitt had certainly incurred an unusual weight of responsibility; but he felt that the great cause in which the nation had embarked was at stake; and he hesitated not a moment in risking the consequences of a measure which was calculated to retrieve it from impending ruin.—The good was public;—the danger personal. And the man who, in a similar situation, would not have displayed the same fortitude, and have exposed himself to the same risk, might be a virtuous individual, but could be no Statesman, and would be wholly unqualified for the office of Prime Minister of a great country. Mr. Bragge supported the arguments of Mr. Pitt, and declared his opinion, that his conduct, so far from meriting censure, was highly deserving the gratitude of the nation; but, at the same time, with that sober, discreet, and just, regard for the Constitution, which is the distinguishing characteristic of genuine patriotism, he was desirous that such a proceeding, dictated as it was by necessity, should not be drawn into precedent in future, notwithstanding the auspicious consequences which had now resulted from it.—He therefore moved an amendment, which went, in fact, to substitute the following motion, for the original motion of Mr. Fox:—"That the measure of advancing the several sums of money, which appear, from the accounts presented to the House in that Session of Parliament, to have

* Woodfall's Reports, December 14, 1796, p. 374—395.

been issued for the service of the Emperor, though not to be drawn into precedent, but upon occasion of special necessity, was, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, a justifiable and proper exercise of the discretion vested in his Majesty's Ministers by the vote of credit, and calculated to produce consequences, which have proved highly advantageous to the common cause, and to the general interests of Europe."

Some discussion ensued on the amended motion, in which Mr. Sheridan took a conspicuous part. As usual, he brandished the weapons of wit and ridicule, with considerable address; but studiously omitted to notice every leading principle, and every prominent fact, upon which Mr. Pitt had professed to rest his defence.—He pretended, indeed, to examine the *precedents* referred to by the Minister, but in a way so loose and vague as to justify the belief, that he had not taken the trouble to consult them.—"The first precedent," said he, "is that, in 1706, of the advance to the Duke of Savoy;"* but he must have supposed the memory of the House to be very defective, as they had heard Mr. Pitt refer, generally, to various precedents before the revolution, and, specifically, to one in the year 1701, to another in 1704, and to a third in 1705. In this case the money had been sent during the recess of Parliament. He briefly adverted to the precedents in 1787, and in 1792; and those he seriously stated to be the precedents on which the Minister relied for his justification, though Mr. Pitt had not only mentioned those three; but, specifically, *seven or eight* others.† Mr. Sheridan, evidently mortified at the *argumentum ad hominem* to which Mr. Pitt had recourse at the close of his speech, and the force and justice of which the House had most sensibly felt, made an awkward endeavour to retort it on the Minister, by observing, that it came with an ill-grace from him, whose ministerial conduct had been one continual attack upon the liberties of his country. Were it possible that his venerable and illustrious father could look down upon the three last years of his history, to see

* Woodfall's Reports, December 14, p. 403.

* See Mr. Wilberforce's Speech in Woodfall's Reports, December 14, p. 412.

him sit and applaud his confidential friends in reviling *the sacred institution of juries;** and that one of the most illustrious pensioners of the Crown had not even been rebuked for saying, that Courts of Justice were become nothing more than schools for sedition, to see him covering the whole force of the country with barracks and *bastiles,* without even submitting it as a question to Parliament; to see the whole country put under military government, and the people placed under subjection to the bayonet, while, as if this were not sufficient, their mouths were shut up, and themselves prevented from meeting to consult on their grievances; and, proceeding in this climax of constitutional violence, wresting from them, one after another, all their rights, came at last to take out of the hands of the representatives the guardian disposal of their money.—Of all the Ministers that ever governed the affairs of this country, he was the man who had employed, in his administration, the worst of means, and entailed upon his country the greatest of evils. If two motives could be assigned to his conduct,—if it could be said, on the one hand, that he could be guided by views of power, and sentiments of ambition, or by feelings of patriotism and virtue, he should not hesitate to ascribe the former to a Minister, whose whole life had marked the same disregard for the one, as attention to the other.†

This empty rodomontade is literally transcribed from the most accurate reports of the Parliamentary proceedings of the day. It is evident that the orator's zeal not only out-stripped his judgment, but confounded his reason; for he omitted to inform his expectant audience what would have been the sensations, what the sentiments, of the venerable patriot, whose shade he so emphatically invoked, had he been able to burst through the confines of the grave, to re-visit the earth, and to contemplate the public actions of his son,—" the worthy offspring of a worthy

* *Sacred* as Mr. Sheridan always considered the institution of Juries, whenever it suited the purpose of the moment so to represent them, it has been seen that, in the case of Mr. Reeves, he exerted his utmost efforts to deprive a British subject of all its benefits and advantages.

† Woodfall's Reports, December 14, p. 407, 408.

sire." This democratic rant, considered as a specimen of popular eloquence, fell far short of many of the wretched effusions of the political field-preachers of the London Corresponding Society; and, viewed as a grave address from a member of the British House of Commons to his colleagues, upon a question of great public importance, it must sink still lower in the estimate of impartial wisdom, which can descry in it nothing but the malignity of spleen, the misrepresentations of party, and the falsehoods of faction.

From some allusion which had fallen from Mr. Sheridan, in the course of his speech, Mr. Wilberforce was led to entertain an apprehension that he (Mr. Sheridan) was about to become the defender of his (Mr. Wilberforce's) morals; and, sensibly alive to the consequences of any defence from such a quarter, he hastened to assure Mr. Sheridan, that he did not thank him for the proffered service; he wished his morals to be left to shift for themselves, and not to have his countenance.* In his reply, Mr. Fox contended that the only real defenders of the constitution were to be found in the ranks of Opposition; and that the whole transaction, which gave rise to the present discussion, was *a juggle and a fraud.*—He insisted that none of the precedents were applicable to the point in question; adverted to the *persecutions* which took place four years before, when, by the distorted laws of the country of legal tyranny, *Ministers* had obtained verdicts;—declared, that if the measure in question were not reprobated, he should regard that man as a hyprocrite who pretended to see any distinction between this government and an absolute monarchy; and concluded with asserting, that he did not retract one of the strong opinions which he had advanced, in former days;—and that he had no hesitation in saying, that occasions might arise in a, comparatively, free country, when men might be driven to the necessity of resistance.†—On a division, Mr. Bragge's amendment received the sanction of the House; *two hundred and eighty-five* members having voted for it, and *eighty-one* against it. Thus was a projected vote of censure converted into a mark of approbation; and the Opposition, who had brought forward the discussion, had the

* Idem Ibid. p. 412. † Id. Ibid. p. 418, 419.

mortification to find, that, in the support of Mr. Pitt's principles and conduct, the New Parliament seemed disposed to follow the traces of the old.

It was not till the close of the year 1796, (the 30th of December) that the rupture of the negotiation at Paris, the particulars of which have been detailed, were officially noticed to Parliament, by a Royal Message. In this message his Majesty declared, that he had been actuated by the sincerest desire to restore the blessings of peace; and that he had now the consolation of reflecting, that the continuance of the calamities of war could be imputed only to the unjust and exorbitant views of his enemies.

Mr. Pitt moved the address on this message, in which the House concurred with his Majesty in lamenting the rupture of the negotiation, and in imputing it to the ambition of France, and assured him of the necessary support for the continuance of the war with vigour and effect. He introduced his motion by a speech of great length, in which he expressed his extreme disappointment, that his sincere endeavours to procure a peace had failed of success; took a full and comprehensive view of the origin of the war; of the hostile disposition and views of the enemy; of all the circumstances attending the negotiation for peace; and of the relative disposition of the two countries. He shewed, that the conduct of the Directory had been marked by equivocation and subterfuge, and had terminated in a gross and premeditated insult to our Sovereign, by the abrupt dismission of his representative. And he proved, from the new constitution of France, that the alledged pretext for refusing to restore the Austrian Netherlands to the Emperor, had no foundation in fact.

The address was opposed by Mr. Erskine, who undertook the gigantic task of proving, in opposition not only to Mr. Pitt's assertion, but to the general conviction of Europe, and to the most authentic documents, and best established facts, *that France was* NOT *the aggressor in the war, and that the prolongation of the contest was not owing to the pride and*

*obstinacy of the enemy.**—But, at the very opening of his speech, a convenient indisposition spared him the trouble of entering into a detail which could only have ended in his exposure and confusion.—This is stated more positively, because his intended speech was afterwards published, and exhibited the most irrefragable proofs of his perfect ignorance of the main facts on which his conclusion was founded, and the most shameful inattention to the leading circumstances of a case on which he undertook to decide in the most dogmatical manner.†

This apparent defect, however, in the opposition to the address, was amply supplied by Mr. Fox, who entered, at great length, not merely into the immediate subject of discussion, but into all the points connected with the original question of aggression, with the conduct of the Ministers in the progress of the war, and with the avowed dispositions of the different rulers of Republican France, with an ingenuity which no man knew better how to adapt to his purpose; but with a sophistry unworthy of his talents; and for an object still more unworthy his character and country, he pleaded the cause of France against England. His speech, indeed, in the mouth of a French Minister, would have been appropriate, consistent, and natural. Nor could the most acute and intelligent observer, had he first seen it in the French language, have discovered in it a single principle, feature, or sentence, which would have betrayed its origin, or induced even a suspicion that it was of English birth. A more laboured and ingenious defence of their conduct and principles, the united talents of the French Directory, their Ministers, and Councils, could not possibly have supplied. Every argument which he had employed, from the commencement of the war to the present moment, was repeated on this occasion, pressed with greater vehemence, and decorated with fresh embellishments. With unblushing effrontery, he maintained the *sincerity* of the *French* Directory, and the *insincerity* of the *British* Cabinet, in

* Woodfall's Reports, Dec. 30, p. 617, 618.

† I must refer my readers, for proofs of the truth of the character which I have here given of Mr. Erskine's memorable "*View of the Causes and Consequences of the present War with France*," to the two Letters which I addressed to that gentleman on the subject; but more particularly to the second Letter, in which they will find comments on such instances of ignorance and inattention as cannot fail to excite their surprise.

their avowed wishes for peace, and in the negotiations for producing it.* Forgetful, or rather regardless, of his former peremptory declaration, that this country could obtain from France honourable terms of peace, that if a disposition to peace on our part were made known to her, her concessions would be as ample as we could wish, he was not ashamed, a few months after, to observe, that it was not to be expected that the French would readily listen to terms of peace dictated by the present Ministers, unless they were reduced to that state of necessity and submission which would leave them no alternative.†— And yet had he constantly urged these very Ministers to open a treaty with the Directory! Now, too, he had *no hopes of peace on any permanent basis,*‡ except the present system of policy was entirely changed, and the principles on which the war was undertaken were totally disavowed! And, that the House might not misconceive him, he repeated the remark in a subsequent part of his speech, saying,—"I believe, in my conscience, that this country cannot have peace, without a change of system in politics, nor without a *change of Ministers.*§ *I say that your system must be altered, and your Ministers changed, or you cannot have peace.*" In the month of February, the necessity of this change had not occurred to Mr. Fox, (or rather Mr. Fox then admitted that it had actually occurred,‖) and he did not pretend that any subsequent event had intervened to produce it. In the course of his oration, he declared that he loved the Constitution under which he was born, but not the Constitution which Ministers had created,—in other words, not the Constitution as it existed in 1796. He concluded one of the most mischievous and unprincipled speeches which had been delivered, in any place, since the French Revolution, with moving, as an amendment, that the House had learned, with inexpressible concern, that the negotiation, which his Majesty had lately commenced for the restoration of peace, had been unhappily frustrated; that, in so awful and momentous a crisis, they felt it their duty to speak to his Majesty with that freedom and earnestness which became men anxious to preserve the honour of his Majesty's Crown, and to secure the interests of his people; that, in doing this, they deplored the necessity they were under of declaring, that, as well from the manner in which the late negotiation had

* Woodfall's Reports, Dec. 30, p. 623. † Idem. Ibid. p. 623. ‡ Ibid. 625.
§ Ibid. p. 644. ‖ See Vol. II.

been conducted, as from the substance from the memorial, which appeared to have produced the abrupt termination of it, they had reason to think his Majesty's Ministers were not sincere in their endeavours to procure the blessings of peace, so necessary for this distressed country: and that all prospect of pacification seemed entirely at an end;—for, on the one hand, his Majesty's Ministers insisted upon the restitution of the Netherlands to the Emperor, while, on the other, the French Directory, with equal pertinacity, refused to restore it; that, under these circumstances, the House could not help lamenting the rashness and injustice of Ministers, whose long-continued misconduct had produced this embarrassing situation, by advising his Majesty, before the blessings of peace had been unfortunately interrupted, to refuse all negotiation for the adjustment of the then-subsisting differences, although, at that time, the Netherlands, now the main obstacle to the return of tranquillity, so far from being considered as an object of contest, was solemnly renounced, and the peace of Europe offered into his Majesty's hands upon the basis of that renunciation, and upon the security and independence of Holland, whilst she preserved her neutrality towards France; that the House had further deeply to regret, that, soon after the commencement of the war, when, by the vigour of his Majesty's arms, with the assistance of his allies, the republic of Holland had been rescued from invasion, and the greater part of the Netherlands had been recovered by the Emperor; at a time, too, when most of the Princes of Europe, with resources yet unexhausted, continued firm in their alliances with Great Britain, Ministers did not avail themselves of this high and commanding position for the negotiation of an honourable peace, and the establishment of the political balance of Europe; that, on the contrary, without any example in the principles or practice of this or any other nation, it was with pain the House recollected his Majesty's Ministers refused to set on foot any negotiation whatever with the French Republic; not upon a real or alledged unwillingness on his part, to listen to the propositions now rejected by her, or to any other specific proposal of indemnity or political security, but upon the arrogant and insulting pretence, that her government was not capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity amongst nations, and that, on this unfounded, and merely speculative, assumption, his Majesty was advised to continue the war to a period

when the difficulties in the way of peace had been so increased, by the defection of most of the powers engaged in the confederacy, and by the conquests and consequent pretensions of the French Republic, that the House, having thus *humbly* submitted to his Majesty the reflections which his gracious communications immediately suggested, felt themselves in duty bound, for the information of his Majesty, and the satisfaction of an exhausted people, to proceed, with unremitting diligence, to investigate the causes which had produced our present calamities, and to offer such advice as the alarming and critical circumstances of the nation might require.

Posterity will scarcely believe, that there existed, in either House of Parliament, a man, who, under the peculiar circumstances in which the nation was now placed, and with a knowledge of all the solemn decisions of the great councils of the nation, recorded in their journals, on the various topics here so pointedly referred to, could so far forget what was due to his country, to his own character, and to the assembly which he addressed, as to present, for its adoption, a paper which contained as many falsehoods as assertions; and which was not more repugnant to truth, than degrading to the national character.

The comments which Mr. Fox's speech drew from Mr. Dundas, were pointedly strong, and strictly just. He characterized it as the most mischievous speech he had ever heard in that House. Not one word had Mr. Fox said to add strength to this country, or to favour the negotiation;—on the contrary, nearly the whole of it was calculated to afford protection and encouragement to the enemy. He not only assisted them in the arguments which they had used themselves; but he suggested to them several ingenious arguments of his own, which they had failed to produce in the course of the negotiation. Mr. Dundas expressed his belief, that it had never before occurred to the most inflamed patriot, to the most envenomed oppositionist that ever existed, to plead the cause of the enemy.* After Mr. Grey had repeated the arguments of Mr. Fox, the House divided, when, fortunately for the honour of the country, only *thirty-seven* members voted in favour of the amendment, while it was

* Woodfall's Reports, Dec. 30, p. 647.

indignantly rejected by *two hundred and twelve.** The address was, of course, carried.

The King's Message was discussed, on the same day, in the House of Lords, when Lord Guildford proposed the very same address which was moved by Mr. Fox in the Lower House.—He was supported by the Duke of Bedford, and the Earls of Derby and Abingdon; while the conduct of the government was most ably defended by Lords Grenville and Auckland, and the Earl of Kinnoul. Eight Peers only voted for the amendment, and eighty-six against it.

Lord Fitzwilliam, upon this, as upon a former, occasion, differed both from the Ministers and from the Opposition.—He condemned the former for attempting to open a negotiation for which the enemy had not afforded the smallest encouragement.—They had never retracted the inadmissible principle, advanced in the note to Mr. Wickham, nor the offensive decree of November, 1792, for encouraging the people of other countries to rise up against their established governments. No circumstance had occurred to convince him that their former proud and dangerous principles, and pretensions, did not exist, in full force, at the present hour. He insisted that there could be no safety in fraternizing with such a people; and he illustrated his argument by a reference to the conduct which France had observed towards Genoa, Tuscany, and various other neutral states.

Thus far his Lordship's argument was, indisputably, sound; and it would be difficult, indeed, to find, in the conduct of the French government, any change which could encourage the British Minister to think that they were really desirous of peace with this country; or that a safe

* It may not be improper, nor yet wholly useless, to state *who* the members were that could hold such language to the country, at such a period.—The following is the list of the Minority: J. Baker; Sir Charles Bampfylde; George Barclay; R. Biddulph; hon. Edward Bouverie; J. Brogden; J. R. Burch; F. Burdett; G. Byng; Alderman Combe; J. Courtenay; hon. T. Erskine; C. J. Fox; C. Grey; J. Hare; W. Hussey; N. Jeffreys; J. Nicholl; D. North; H. Peirse; W. Plumer; J. Richardson; Lord W. Russell; J. Scudamore; R. B. Sheridan; G. Shum; W. Smith; Lord R. Spencer Lord Stanley; M. A. Taylor; T. Thompson G. Tierney; hon. H. Tufton; hon. J. Tufton; S. Whitbread; J. Walwyn; C. C. Western; J. Jekyll; and General Tarleton.

and durable peace could be concluded with them. But the conclusions which Lord Fitzwilliam drew from these premises were by no means just. Reverting to his old position, he contended, that Ministers had changed their ground, and departed from the principles on which they had embarked in the contest; and that, therefore, those noble friends of his, who had agreed to support them in the prosecution of the war, could no longer do so with any regard to consistency. This remark induced one of those noblemen, Earl Spencer, to declare, that when he felt it his duty, as a friend to his country, to give his support to government, before he became a member of the administration, he did so, because he thought France the unprovoked aggressor; and that the war was not only just and necessary, but also unavoidable. His principles, however, had never led to the extreme length to which Lord Fitzwilliam's argument went. With regard to the conduct of Ministers, he was able to say, and indeed felt himself bound to declare, that, in the late negotiations they had done their utmost to effect what his Majesty had most sincerely at heart—an earnest and anxious desire to restore peace to this country, and to Europe, on terms equally just, honourable, and solid. This declaration from a nobleman, whose integrity the breath of scandal never polluted, who was known to speak the deliberate sentiments of his mind, and to advance nothing as fact, of which he had not the most positive knowledge, was, of itself, sufficient to decide the question of Ministerial sincerity, and to prove the falsehood of the imputations cast upon the cabinet in the rejected amendments of Lord Guildford and Mr. Fox.

In the subsequent amendment, however, now moved by Lord Fitzwilliam, in conformity with the principles which he had ever avowed, there was nothing reprehensible, nothing injurious to the honour of the country; nothing to depress the spirit of the people; and nothing to calumniate the government. It proceeded, on the contrary, on a noble, manly, and somewhat of a chivalrous, principle; but still it was such as, in the present circumstances of the country, and in the actual state of the continent of Europe, it would have been highly impolitic in the Ministers, who must, in all their public transactions, bear those relative circumstances constantly in their minds, to countenance or adopt. This amendment gave his Majesty full credit for his anxious desire to conclude

a secure and honourable peace, but declared the conviction of the House, founded on an attentive observance of the beginning, progress, and events of the late negotiation, that no future attempt, of a similar kind, on our part, could be wise, decorous and safe, until the common enemy should have abandoned his hostile disposition to all other states, by ceasing to place his own internal regulations above the public law of Europe, to insist, that all others should, in all cases, sacrifice the faith of their alliances, and the protection of their ancient and dearest interests, to the maintenance of his treaties, and the gratification of his ambition; and, for ever, to appeal to the people against their own lawful government.—It further stated, that the House should never consider the possessors of the power in France, (under whatever name or external form of government that power might be exercised) as capable of maintaining the ordinary relations of peace and amity, until they should have disclaimed, in conduct, no less than in words, that system which, having emanated from the original principle of the French Revolution, still continued to operate in a more dangerous, because in a more specious, form, and which, in an address to his Majesty, in January, 1794, that House had described, as " a system disposing, arbitrarily, of the lives and property of a numerous people, violating every restraint of justice, humanity, and religion,—equally incompatible with the happiness of that country, and with the tranquillity of all other nations."

Such was the substance of his Lordship's amendment, which certainly gave a just character of the French government, and of the nature and tendency of their principles; such a character it was as proper and becoming for individuals to exhibit, as it was to impress on the public minds the sentiments and principles which his Lordship avowed, as far as they were warranted by facts; but it by no means followed, that it would be prudent, or politic, for the House of Peers to give it a kind of legislative sanction, or for the Ministers themselves to concur in a measure, which might, in the actual state of affairs, raise a serious obstacle to the accomplishment of their avowed object,—the restoration of peace to Europe. After a few words from Lords Spencer and Grenville, the amendment was negatived without a division;—and both Houses adjourned, on the same day, to the fourteenth of February.

CHAPTER XXXII.

State of Public affairs at the commencement of 1797—Extraordinary run on the Bank—Communications between Mr. Pitt, and the Directors of the Bank—Causes of the Scarcity of Money at this time—Order in council prohibiting payments in Specie at the Bank—Royal Message on the Subject to Parliament—Address moved by Mr. Pitt—Opposed by Mr. Fox—He accuses Mr. Pitt of having ruined the nation—Asserts that the King had claimed a power to annihilate all the property of the Creditors of the Bank—Censures the Order in Council—Maintains that payment in Bank Notes is no payment at all—The Opposition represent the Bank as in a state of Insolvency—Mr. Pitt explains the nature of the Money transactions between the Government and the Bank—Pointed remark of Mr. Dent—Mr. Sheridan moves an Amendment to the Address—The Amendment is rejected, and the Address carried—A Secret Committee is appointed to investigate the affairs of the Bank—Satisfactory Report of the Secret Committee—Flourishing state of the Bank—Its assets exceed its debts by nearly four millions—Vast increase of Commerce—An Act is passed for giving legal effect to the Order in Council—Motion of Mr. Grey in condemnation of the Order in Council, and of the conduct of Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt justifies himself—Exposes the inaccuracy of Mr. Grey's statements—Mr. Pitt censured for breaking a promise which he never made—Amount of Bank Notes in circulation—Different opinions of the policy of the Bank, in diminishing the number of their Notes—The true principle of Banking explained by Mr. Pitt—He censures some of the maxims of Adam Smith as injudicious—He shews that the quantity of Specie in the country has not been diminished since the war—Mr. Grey's vote of censure negatived by two hundred and six votes against sixty—Alderman Combe moves an Address to the King, to remove his Ministers—He accuses Ministers of being hateful to the French, and, therefore, unfit to make a good Peace for England—Observations on this novel discovery—Unconstitutional doctrine, advanced by Mr. Curwen, respecting the duty of a Representative, exposed—Motion rejected by two hundred and forty-two votes against fifty-nine—Mr. Fox moves a repeal of the New Treason and Sedition Acts—Repeats his former arguments on the Subject—Asserts that Charles the Second was a Papist—Abuses the Scotch Judges—Panegyrises Gerald, who had been transported for Seditious practises—Maintains that Public Sedition cannot be dangerous to a State—The Motion is opposed by Serjeant Adair, who vindicates the Scotch Judges, and traces the late attempt on the King's life, to the inflammatory harangues of the Seditious Societies—The public conduct of Mr. Fox truly characterized by Colonel Fullarton—Mr. Fox's motion lost by a great majority—Mr. Harrison's motion for an inquiry into Sinecure Places, and Fees of Office—He is answered by Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt explains the nature of the various Offices—Shews Sinecure Places to be sanctioned by the solemn decisions of Parliament—Moves the previous question—Mr. Sheridan's Speech—His impressive exhortation

to economy and retrenchment, the probable effect of personal experience—He attacks Mr. George Rose, who accuses him of falsehood, and demonstrates the justice of his accusation—Mr. Sheridan explains—Mr. Fox charges Mr. Pitt, and Lord Grenville, with taking Sinecure Places for themselves—Mr. Pitt defended against this charge—Its gross injustice proved—Memorable instance of his disinterested and patriotic spirit—Illiberal attack on Mr. Canning by Mr. Fox—Mr. Fox charged with selling two Sinecure Places to pay a gaming debt—The Speaker interposes—Mr. Canning justifies his own conduct—The previous question carried—Mutiny in the Navy—Factious conduct of the Seamen at Portsmouth—They appoint delegates, and present petitions to the House of Commons, and the Admiralty—Demand a redress of grievances—Their demands complied with—They return to their duty—Mr. Whitbread moves a vote of censure on Mr. Pitt for his conduct respecting the mutiny—Negatived—Fresh mutiny at the Nore—The Mutineers seize two Store Ships, and stop the passage of the River—Government reject their demands—The mutiny quelled—Execution of Parker, the principal Mutineer—Act for the prevention and punishment of attempts to excite mutiny in the Army and Navy, introduced by Mr. Pitt—Eloquent Speech of Mr. Sheridan in support of it—Mr. Pitt proves the mutiny to have been the effect of a settled system to excite disaffection in the country—His judicious observations on the origin and nature of our Penal Laws—Introduces a Bill for preventing all intercourse with the Mutineers—The two bills pass without opposition—Pay of the Army increased—Mr. Grey's motion for a reform in Parliament—Charges Mr. Pitt with inconsistency—The charge repelled—Mr. Erskine seconds the motion—Mr. Pitt opposes it—Mr. Fox supports it—The House reject it—The Duke of Bedford moves, in the House of Lords, an Address to the King, to dismiss his Ministers—The motion negatived by ninety-one votes against fourteen—Bill for allowing Roman Catholics, and Protestant Dissenters, to hold Commissions in the Supplementary Militia, opposed by Lord Kenyon and the Bishop of Rochester—Supported by the Duke of Norfolk, who asserts the Superior purity of the Protestant faith; but accuses the Church of displaying a spirit of persecution—Lord Grenville defends the established Church, and contrasts its liberal and tolerant spirit with the bigotry, intolerance, and persecution of the Church of Rome—The House reject the Bill—Vote of Credit—Parliament Prorogued.

[1797.] The early part of the year 1797 was, on many accounts, the most gloomy period of Mr. Pitt's political life. The failure of the negotiation for peace, combined with other causes, some of a temporary, others of a permanent, nature, had materially affected the credit of the country; the funds had sunk full three per cent. beneath their lowest point of depression, towards the close of the American war.* The bank, from various circumstances, had experienced such an unusual demand for cash, as to excite very serious alarm. The seeds of rebellion had begun to unfold themselves in Ireland;—the spirit of disaffection

* The lowest price of the three per cent. consols, in 1781, was 54¼. In February, 1797, they were as low as 50½; and, in the following month, they were reduced to 50—and in April, to 48½.

had extended to our seamen; and the nation was involved in a contest with a malignant and implacable foe, of which it was difficult to conjecture, either the termination or the result. The situation of Prime Minister, at such a crisis, was certainly the least enviable, and the most arduous, of all situations. Mr. Pitt was fully sensible of the difficulties of the times, of the importance of the duties which he had to discharge, and of the weight of the responsibility which attached to his office; but, fortified by the innate integrity of his heart, and by the native firmness of his mind, he did not shrink from the efforts which his country demanded at his hands, but manfully opposed the storm which seemed to threaten her with destruction, and resolved to proportion his exertions to the exigencies which called for their application.

His first care was to provide for the safety of the Bank, in which the stability of the national credit was essentially implicated. In the course of the two last years, Mr. Pitt had various communications with the Bank, on the subject of the payment of Treasury bills, or bills drawn on the Treasury, for public services from abroad, accepted by the commissioners, and made payable at the Bank;—and, in respect of other accommodations, which the Directors of the Bank had been in the constant habit of affording to government. On these accounts, the Bank were considerably in advance to government, and they had repeatedly requested the Minister to adopt some other means for the payment of the Treasury bills, so as to prevent the advances of the Bank from ever exceeding the sum of half a million. To the propriety of this request Mr. Pitt had acceded, but the multiplicity of objects of greater consequence, which incessantly pressed upon his attention, and the magnitude of the sums drawn from the continent, and from Saint Domingo, where the expence was enormous, had hitherto prevented him from having recourse to those measures which were necessary to afford that relief to the Bank which had been so properly, and so repeatedly, urged.—He had, at length, however, resolved, by means of a new loan, and of other financial regulations, to provide the requisite means for this purpose.

In the course of these communications, the Governor of the Bank had apprized Mr. Pitt, in the year 1796, that there had been very unusual

demands upon the Bank for cash. This was ascribed, in some degree, to the failure of many of the country banks, which had occurred three years before, and the consequent diminution of the number of bank notes in circulation; and to the great increase of commerce; the latter requiring, of course, the employment of larger capitals, and an extended *circulating medium*, at the very time when the circulating medium had been considerably lessened by the former. Indeed, from the increase of freight, insurance, and other extraordinary expences, it is perfectly clear, that a larger capital is necessary in time of war, than in time of peace, for carrying on even the same degree of commerce.—In Scotland, and in Ireland more particularly, the scarcity of money had occasioned great demands on the bank, while the scanty harvests of two succeeding years had rendered it necessary to expend very large sums in the purchase of corn. The subsidies, or loans, granted to our continental allies, though never paid in British coin, had occasioned an exportation to a certain extent, of bullion and dollars. It appeared, however, by the authority of Mr. Boyd, that not more than £1,200,000 in bullion, had been transmitted to the Emperor, the remainder of the loans to him having been paid in bills of exchange. There was one other cause, of a different nature, which concurred to produce this extraordinary run upon the Bank.—A very general apprehension prevailed, that the French would attempt an invasion of the country; and this induced numbers of persons to collect all the specie they could, and to keep it out of circulation, on the supposition that, in the confusion which such an event would produce, it would be the only kind of property for which the necessaries of life would be exchanged. In a conversation, on this subject, with some of the Bank Directors, Mr. Pitt observed, that, by all his information, he could not learn that any hostile preparations, of consequence, were making in France, to invade this country, except the fleet which was refitting at Brest, after being driven from the coast of Ireland; but that he could not answer that no partial attack on this country would be made by such a mad and desperate enemy as we had to contend with.

On the 24th of February, 1797, the Deputy-Governor of the Bank, and Mr. Bosanquet, one of the Directors, had an interview with Mr. Pitt, on the subject of the alarming decrease of their cash, in that and the preceding

month; and to enquire of him how far he thought the Bank might go on paying cash, and when he would think it necessary to interfere before the cash was so reduced as to be detrimental to the immediate service of the State? Mr. Pitt truly regarded this as a matter of great importance, and told these gentlemen, that he must be prepared with some resolution to bring forward in the Council for a proclamation, to stop the issue of cash from the Bank.—And he thought it would become proper to appoint a Secret Committee of the House of Commons, to investigate the state of the affairs of the Bank;—to which the Deputy Governor acceded, observing, that the Directors were perfectly prepared to produce a statement of their affairs to such a Committee.*

Accordingly a Council was assembled, on the 26th of February, when, in consequence of Mr. Pitt's representations, they declared it to be their unanimous opinion, that it was indispensably necessary, for the public service, that the Directors of the Bank of England should forbear to issue any cash in payment, until the sense of Parliament could be taken on that subject, and the proper measures adopted thereon, for maintaining the means of circulation, and supporting the public and commercial credit of the kingdom, at this important conjuncture; and they ordered a copy of their minute to be transmitted to the Directors of the Bank, who were required to conform to the same, on the ground of the exigency of the case, until the sense of Parliament could be taken.

This preliminary step was followed by a message from the King, delivered to the House of Commons, on the 27th of February, accompanied by the above Order of Council, and recommending the subject to the most serious attention of Parliament. This message was taken into consideration, the next day, when Mr. Pitt moved the appointment of a Secret Committee, for the double purpose of ascertaining the existence of the necessity on which the Order of Council had been issued, and for examining and stating the total amount of out-standing demands on the Bank of England, and likewise of the funds for discharging the same. They were to communicate the result of this inquiry to the House,

* See the printed Correspondence between Mr. Pitt and the Bank.

together with their opinion of the expediency of providing for the confirmation and continuance of the measures taken, in pursuance of the minute in Council.

After the temper which the Opposition had displayed, during the whole of the present contest, it was not to be expected, that *any* measure proposed by Mr. Pitt would be suffered to pass, without a repetition of that abuse, and of those calumnies, which they had incessantly lavished upon him.—Mr. Fox now accused him of having brought the nation to the brink of destruction; he did not scruple to assert, that, by the present measure, the King, or Executive Government, had claimed a power to annihilate, by one breath, all the property of the creditors of the Bank.* Nay, even this imputation, monstrous as it was, did not satisfy his factious mind—for a mind more factious than his was, at this period, the annals of British history do not exhibit,—for he soon added: "The measure that has actually been adopted, is the most pernicious in principle, and the most dangerous in its effects. It will not easily be erased from the memories of men, or from the annals of the country, that, whatever may be the vaunted theory of the constitution, whatever the national value of our rights, whatever the *pretended* security of our laws, one word from the King may have the effect to *destroy* one half of the property of the country!"† To such extremes was he carried, by the blind fury of party zeal, that he contended there was no difference between a refusal to pay the dividends in specie, and a refusal to pay them altogether! Although he well knew, that not one person in a thousand ever received his dividends in specie,—a preference being generally given to bank notes. He told the Minister, that he had no right to reproach the French with the disorder in their finances; since he had himself brought this country into the same situation.—He insisted that, by the measure in question, we should be on the very verge, aye, even in the gulph, of ruin!‡ Mr. Pitt, he said, had disgraced himself, and ruined his country. He deprecated all partial inquiry into the affairs of the Bank, and demanded that all their transactions, and all their proceedings, should be laid open to

* Woodfall's Reports, February 28, 1797, p 93.

† Idem Ibid. p. 94. ‡ Ibid. p. 106.

the public; although it was perfectly clear that the public could have no farther right to investigate the affairs of the Bank, than what arose out of the necessity of the case; and that this necessity required only that it should be ascertained, whether the assets of the Bank were fully sufficient to answer every demand upon it. But Mr. Fox had little judgment;—in the present case, indeed, it was blinded by faction;—he always ran into extremes, and was never satisfied with proportioning his remedy to the evil which called for its application. Other members of the party represented the conduct of the Bank as an act of insolvency; asserted that Bank paper must *necessarily* fall into discredit; and expressed their fears that it would sink as low even as *assignats* and *mandats*.—And, with as little knowledge of the fact, they contended, that if the government would repay the Bank all the money which it had advanced, for the public, it might resume its payments in specie. This erroneous statement Mr. Pitt hastened to correct, though he neither thought it worth his while to notice the abusive language of Mr. Fox, nor would suffer himself to be led, by the violence of his opponents, to enter into explanations which the most imperious motives of public duty required him to avoid. He asked, whether it was imagined that the Bank advanced their specie to government, and that he, with rapacious hand, had seized upon so much money? By far the greater part of the sum due to the Bank consisted of floating advances, not now made for the first time; nor was there more outstanding at that time than there had been, on many occasions, before he came into office.* The advances were commonly made in notes, and paid in the same manner. Unless the Bank had made no other advances than those to government, and unless these had occasioned an issue of paper, producing a demand for specie, which otherwise would not have occurred, it could not be said, that the advances to government could, in any view, produce the difficulties of the Bank for cash. It was not impossible that, on some future occasion, a loan might be required for taking up these floating advances, but was it conceived that such a loan would be in specie? and, though it were, it could not supply the Bank with a single additional guinea in cash. It was truly observed, in this

* Mr. Pitt's speech, Feb. 28, p. 117, Woodfall's Reports.

debate, by Mr. Dent, that gentlemen appeared more desirous of entering into personal abuse than of promoting the public interest;—and not all the sarcastic remarks of Mr. Sheridan, of which he was not sparing, could destroy the force of the observation. Mr. Sheridan moved an amendment, the intent of which was to extend the objects of inquiry; but it was negatived by two hundred and forty-four votes against eighty-six; and the original motion of Mr. Pitt, for the appointment of a Secret Committee, was carried.—The Committee was accordingly appointed, and consisted of Sir John Scott, (the Attorney-General;) Mr. Hawkins Browne; Mr. Bragge; Alderman Anderson; Mr. John Fane; Mr. Thomas Grenville; Mr. Wilberforce; Mr. Grey; Sir John Mitford, (the Solicitor-General;) Mr. Hussey; Mr. Wilberforce Bird; Mr. Plumer; Mr. Blackburne; and Mr. Bramston. The composition of this Committee, supposing the Minister to have had any influence in appointing it, afforded the strongest proof that there was no intention of concealing any thing which was necessary for the real object of the inquiry; any thing, in short, which the public interest did not require to be concealed. Meanwhile, a bill was passed, with the utmost expedition, for repealing an existing law which prohibited the issue of bank notes for a less sum than five pounds.—The object of this bill was to remedy the inconvenience which must accrue, in the payment of small sums, from the stoppage of payment, in specie, at the Bank.

The Secret Committee lost no time in entering upon the important inquiry entrusted to them by the House; and, so early as the third of March, they made their first report, in which they stated, that, after due examination, they found that the total amount of the outstanding demands on the Bank, on the 25th of February, 1797, (to which day the accounts could completely be made up) was, £13,770,390.—And that the total amount of the funds, for discharging these demands, (not including the permanent debt due from Government of £11,686,800 which bore an interest of three per cent.) was, on the same day, £17,597,280; and that the result was, that there was, on the 25th day of February, 1797, a surplus of effects belonging to the Bank, beyond the amount of their debts, amounting to the sum of £3,826,800, exclusive of the debt due from Government. In a second report, they

declared their opinion, that it was necessary to *provide* for the confirmation and continuance, for a time to be limited, of the measures taken in pursuance of the order of Council, on the 26th of February. They afterwards presented a third report, in which they traced the progress of the extraordinary run on the Bank, and the principal causes which had contributed to produce it; which causes have been already noticed. But, in immediate reference to the measure adopted by the Council, on the representations of Mr. Pitt, they stated that, between the 21st of February, the day on which the Governor of the Bank imparted his apprehensions to the Minister, and the 26th of that month, the drain on the Bank for cash had increased in a still more rapid and alarming proportion; and that, supposing such drain should continue to operate, and still more so, if it should increase, the committee were of opinion, that there was strong reason to apprehend, that the Bank might, in the course of a few days, not only be prevented from affording the usual and necessary supply of cash for the public service, but ultimately be totally disabled from continuing its payments in cash in the ordinary course of its business; and that, by a further reduction to any considerable amount, the danger to the public would have been greatly increased, and it might have become much more difficult to re-instate the affairs of the Bank, and restore the general circulation of the kingdom; that there was no reason to suppose, that the drain would, on the ensuing Monday and following days, be in the least diminished, but rather that it would have been considerably augmented; that no means were suggested, by the Directors of the Bank, for preventing the danger which was apprehended, nor did any such occur to them at the time, or had since been suggested to the committee; and it, therefore, appeared to the committee, that no measure could then have been taken, which would have prevented such danger, other than the suspension of payments in cash, required by the minute in Council;—they were, therefore, of opinion, that, on the 26th of February, there did exist a necessity for issuing the minute of Council of that date, though, at the time, not warranted by law.

There was one part of the last report of this committee which proved highly gratifying to every friend of his country, particularly

after the bold, unqualified, assertions which had been recently made, by Mr. Fox, and his associates, that the nation was in a state of bankruptcy.—It stated, that the balance of trade, in favour of this country, had, during the war, very greatly increased, so as, in each of the years, 1793, 1794, 1795, and 1796, to have amounted, upon an average, to about £6,500,000, creating a balance, on the whole, of about twenty-six millions, notwithstanding the diminution of the general balance, by the sums paid (upwards of seven millions in two years) for the great importation of corn; occasioned by the extraordinary scarcity which lately prevailed, and encouraged by large bounties, to an extent much beyond the ordinary scale of commerce in that article.

On the 13th of March, Mr. Pitt brought in a bill for enabling the Bank of England to issue notes in payments of demands upon them, instead of cash, in pursuance of the late order of council to that effect.—This bill underwent much discussion in its progress through the House, but ultimately passed the Commons on the 7th of April; and, in a few days, having been adopted by the Upper House, without alteration, received the Royal sanction, and became a law. Its operation was limited to the 24th of June.

Mr. Grey, who was a member of the Secret Committee appointed to investigate the affairs of the Bank, could not so far forget his political habits, or lose sight of his political pursuits, as to subject his own opinion to that of others, or to acquiesce in the sentiments and decisions of a majority. As if resolved to see, and to acknowledge, no other culprit than Mr. Pitt, and to make him solely responsible for every adverse event, he brought forward, on the 16th of May, a series of resolutions, the object and intent of which were to hold up the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as guilty of the most criminal misconduct, for the disgrace which had fallen upon the Bank of England, and for all the bad consequences which resulted from it.—In opposition, as he acknowledged, not merely to the majority, but to *every* member of the Committee,* as well as to the declared sense of the

* Woodfall's Reports, May 16, p. 148.

House, he maintained, that the Order of Council was not proper, and was not necessary. In the speech, with which he prefaced the introduction of his resolutions, he went over the whole of the correspondence between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Directors of the Bank, and inferred from thence, that the embarrassments which the Bank experienced, and which occasioned the consequent stoppage of payment in cash, were solely imputable to the unfair dealings, and breach of faith, in Mr. Pitt. His resolutions went to establish this point; they were nineteen in number, but the first eighteen must be considered only as *premises*, whence the *conclusion* was drawn in the last, which stated, that it appeared to the House, upon the most attentive consideration of the circumstances above-mentioned, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been guilty of a criminal inattention to the public interest, and a high breach of duty, by which the credit of the nation had been materially impaired.

Mr. Pitt entered into a brief justification of his conduct, against these allegations;—he said very little on the necessity and propriety of the Order in Council, as they had been fully admitted by the Committee, by the House, by the Directors of the Bank, and by the public at large. He considered the motion as resting on two distinct grounds; First, the advances made to government by the Bank in general, and the remittances made to the Emperor; Secondly, the conclusion drawn by Mr. Grey, that these two circumstances were the principal causes which produced the order for suspending the issuing of cash by the Bank.—He denied the justice of Mr. Grey's inference, and maintained that many other causes than those assigned by him, had combined to produce the event which formed the ground of his censure. He admitted, that repeated applications had been made to him, on the part of the Directors of the Bank, respecting the advances and remittances complained of; and that assurances had been given by him, that the advances should be reduced to half a million.—But the House was in justice bound to consider the peculiar nature of those circumstances which prevented him from carrying into execution the assurances so given.—When the magnitude and diversity of the operations of the present war were fairly viewed;—when the unforeseen exigencies, which called for unforeseen

expences, were candidly weighed, it would not be denied, that it was completely impossible to ascertain, with any exactness, the amount of the disbursements likely to be incurred, or to form estimates on which any reliance could be placed. Since, then, the validity of this position could not be impeached, and the impossibility of bringing forward *certain* estimates, was established by experience, the only question which remained for the House to decide, was, whether the assurances, made by government, had been given with an evident intention of carrying them into effect? A consideration, also, of the particular steps which had been taken to fulfil these assurances, would be necessary to enable the House to judge of the sincerity of intention with which they had been advanced.

It was stated, in one of the resolutions now submitted to the House, that the Treasury Bills, paid by the Bank, amounted to fifteen millions; but the question was not, what had or what had not been paid, but what was the amount of the outstanding debt, and what the means which government possessed to discharge it. Mr. Pitt felt that he laboured under peculiar disadvantage in stating,—but it was a disadvantage which no human foresight could possibly provide for,—that he had been very much disappointed in the unexpected amount, as well of the Bills drawn from the Continent, as of the sums drawn for to meet the exigencies of the war, in the West Indies, the precise extent of which he was even, at that moment, unable to state.—Therefore, when Mr. Grey contended, as an argument in favour of his own conclusions, that the expectations held out in the different Budgets had seldom been fulfilled, he contended for that which could not be denied, and which was certainly a matter of great and serious concern; but he admitted, at the same time, that the financial statements were correct, founded, as they evidently were, on the probable estimates laid before the House. As a proof of the sincerity of the intention manifested by government, to reduce the advances, Mr. Pitt referred to a document brought forward by the Secret Committee, by which it appeared that the outstanding Bills of Exchange were reduced, on the fifth of January, 1795, to £1,796,000; and, on the thirty-first of March, to £500,000.—That they were not kept at that low sum was imputable solely to the

increase of the great and unavoidable expences which could not be foreseen in the prosecution of the war. The Bills of Exchange actually paid by government between the fifth of January, 1795, and the fifth of January, 1796, amounted to no less than *eight millions*, while those which were outstanding did not exceed £500,000. He made this statement merely to convince the House of the sincerity of his assurances, that he would reduce the advances to government, and had only to lament that his most sanguine desires, and his constant exertions, to attain that object, had failed, from circumstances which he could neither anticipate nor controul. But so far were the Bank Directors from considering their advances to government to be prejudicial to their affairs, that, after their representations to him in November, on the danger of making them, they absolutely agreed to make them, in the subsequent month of July; and then advanced money on the Land and Malt duties, notwithstanding their previous remonstrances.

He made some observations on the contradictory evidence of two of the Bank Directors, Mr. Raikes and Mr. Giles, respecting a conversation between them and himself, in which Mr. Giles asserted, that Mr. Pitt had promised that no future advances should be made to the Emperor, while Mr. Raikes positively stated, that the conversation had no relation whatever to future advances. In the first place, it was not to be conceived that the Minister would be guilty of such a gross breach of his duty, as to tie up his hands from acting as circumstances might require, in supporting our allies; and, in the next place, where such contradictory evidence had been delivered, a candid and upright judge would have scorned to make it the subject of a criminal charge. Mr. Grey, however, made it the foundation of one of *his* accusations; and it was directly, as Mr. Pitt observed, though no notice whatever had been given to him on that subject, pressed upon him as a specific ground of crimination, and he was to be censured for a breach of faith, in not considering himself bound to the performance of a condition with which he was wholly unacquainted.

In considering the remittances made to the Emperor, Mr. Pitt corrected one of the mistakes of Mr. Grey, who had taken it for granted

that, because certain sums were advanced to government, Bank Notes must be issued to an equal amount with the total of those advances,—But this was by no means the fact. In 1783, the advances were little less than they were at the present period, yet the Notes in circulation, in the last month of 1783, did not exceed six millions. Since that period, the Notes in circulation had risen from six to between nine and ten millions. The various circulation of Notes, and the circuitous manner in which they passed through different hands, accounted for the competency of a small quantity of them to discharge demands of a superior amount. But it had been urged, that, if the advances had not been made, the Bank had been safe. If it were meant, by this, that, in such case, the Bank would have been able to wind up its affairs, Mr. Pitt did not consider that as a matter of safety; and he hoped it would not be so considered by any person who was seriously concerned for the prosperity and credit of the country. He declared his opinion, that the safety of the Bank consisted in giving vigour to the trade and commerce of the country, by diffusing a circulating medium, without the aid of which the nation would be unable to preserve its affluence and independence, and without which its dearest interests would be absolutely destroyed. He acknowledged, however, that it was a question of very great importance, how far a greater or smaller issue of paper was favourable to commerce.*

* A great difference of opinion had obtained, on this very subject, between the Directors of the Bank, and other persons of great commercial knowledge. The former, in consequence of the alarms and embarrassments which they had experienced, had resolved, in 1796, to diminish their Notes in circulation, so as to make the demands upon them correspond more with the state of their cash. For several years previous to 1796, the average amount of Bank Notes in circulation was between ten and eleven milions, hardly ever falling below nine millions, and not often exceeding eleven millions. But at the latter end of 1796, and at the beginning of 1797, the amount was considerably less, and, on the twenty-fifth of February, 1797, it did not exceed 8,640,250*l.*

It had, indeed, been still lower in 1782, 1783, and 1784, but, at that time, the foreign commerce of the kingdom was not even one-half of what it was in 1796; of course there did not exist a necessity for the same quantity of a circulating medium. The late reduction of Bank Notes occasioned distress, in the commercial world, by limiting the discount of bills. The distress, indeed, was increased by the rate of interest being fixed, by law, at five per cent. when much higher interest might be obtained by the purchase of government securities. A decided opinion, however, was expressed by several persons, (examined by the Committee,

Mr. Grey had charged the Bank of England with departing from the character of simplicity and honesty which ought to distinguish all similar establishments, when they had not money sufficient to discharge all their out-standing Notes. Mr. Pitt, on the contrary, asserted, that if Banks were compelled to have, upon every unfounded and unforeseen alarm, a sufficient quantity of money to answer the demands which might possibly be made upon them, there would, at once, be an end to the principle upon which banking had been uniformly conducted. That principle he had always understood to be the employment of a circulating capital larger than the real capital.

In reference to the allegation, that the money sent to the Emperor, and other foreign powers, had produced the Order in Council, of the twenty-sixth of February, Mr. Pitt observed, that, as it was established that there were a great number of other causes which might all have equally concurred to produce that event, it could not, with any degree of justice, be ascribed to that one alone. If it were established, then, that an increased capital required an increased circulation, and that there was, at the same time, a diminution in the amount of country Bank Notes, which had occasioned a run on the Bank; if those, and many other causes, had been proved to have had a share in producing those circumstances which rendered the Order of Council necessary, Mr. Grey

of Secrecy of the House of Lords,) of the inconvenience produced by the conduct of the Bank, in diminishing their Notes in circulation, and in restricting their discounts. It was maintained, that an increased quantity of Bank Notes, proportioned to the increased occasion for them, must tend rather to prevent than to promote a demand for Guineas; and that the principle which must regulate the conduct of private Bankers, in the amount of them, did not apply to the Bank of England. A great quantity of Notes were absolutely necessary for the circulation of the metropolis; and, in that respect, it was immaterial, in a public point of view, whether they were issued for advances made to government, or in discounts to private persons. An opinion was also expressed, that the resolution of the Bank to restrict their discounts had excited an alarm and distrust which led to an increase of the drain of their cash; and that it contributed also to the forced sale and depreciation of public securities, and to other embarrassments occasioned by an insufficient supply of Bank Notes and Cash; which supply had not kept pace with the demand arising from the employment and circulation of active capital, particularly for the last fifteen months.—*See Report from the Committee of Secrecy appointed by the Lords.*

would find it impossible to persuade the House, that it was occasioned solely by remittances to the Emperor, even though it were to be admitted, that those remittances had carried out of the country a considerable quantity of Specie and Bullion.

There were many different theories of the balance of trade, but Mr. Pitt would not subscribe to any of them, upon however high authority they might stand, without previously submitting them to the test of his own judgment. Much as he respected the opinions of Adam Smith, whose works had been quoted by Mr. Grey, he could not but dissent from several of the maxims which he had advanced. He thought him always ingenious, but sometimes injudicious. Instead, however, of going the length of Mr. Grey, Adam Smith had treated it as a vulgar opinion, that a number of millions sent out of the country during a war, was injurious to commerce.—Mr. Grey had observed, by way of admonishing the House, that if two events accompanied each other, it was not proper to assert, that one was the cause, and the other the effect;—Mr. Pitt availed himself of the admonition, and added that, though one event should be predicted to be the effect of another, it was neither just nor proper to conclude, merely because it so happened, that the prediction was founded in truth. The state of the country had been represented as most distressing; but the favourable state of the exchange, and the great increase of exports, demonstrated the fallacy of the representation. Indeed, it was a great consolation to reflect, that commerce had poured wealth into the country in a far greater proportion than the expences of the war had drawn it out. It was a fact not to be disputed, that the quantity of money in the country, at that time, was not less than the quantity possessed at the beginning of the war.* After some observations of Mr. Fox, who repeated the assertions of Mr. Grey, the House divided, when the resolutions, proposed by the latter, were negatived, by *two hundred and six* votes against *sixty*.

The failure of this attempt did not discourage another member of the party from making an effort to produce the same effect. On the 19th of May, Alderman Combe, in avowed obedience to the orders of his

* Woodfall's Reports, May 16, 1797. Mr. Pitt's speech, p. 170.

constituents, moved the House of Commons, that an humble address should be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be pleased to dismiss, from his councils, his present Ministers, as the best means of obtaining a speedy and honourable peace. In support of this curious motion, the Alderman briefly adverted to the origin of the war, imputing to the Ministers objects and designs which they had repeatedly disavowed; renewing against them the oft-repeated charge of insincerity in their negotiations; but chiefly resting on the triumphant argument, that, as they were hateful to the French, they never could be expected to make a favourable peace!—It was reserved for the present age, to make the strange discovery, that the best qualification for a British Minister was to be a favourite with the enemies of his country;—and that a man, who favoured French principles, justified the conduct of the French government, and condemned all the proceedings of the British Cabinet, in respect of the war, its object, its origin, and its progress, was most likely to make a peace, safe and honourable to Great Britain!—It might have occurred to a less enlightened politician than Mr. Combe, that, if a man of this description were sent to negotiate a peace with France, he would have some difficulty in resisting the most humiliating terms, when reminded, that the war, on the part of his country, had been, according to his own admission, most unnecessary, unprovoked, and unjust; a war undertaken to gratify the caprice of a Minister, to extinguish the light of freedom, which had just burst forth on the subjugated and enslaved inhabitants of the Continent, and to favour the cause of that odious tyranny which laboured to keep mankind in chains.—He would be compelled to acknowledge, that the nation, which had acted so base a part, ought to be severely corrected for her folly and injustice; and that, therefore, she was bound to submit to the most rigorous terms which a victorious enemy could impose on her.—Mr. Combe, however, thought it a self-evident proposition, that a Minister, who had dared to apply the most abusive language to the rebels and regicides of Republican France, and to devote their principles to execration, were alike incapable of managing the affairs of *this* country, and of concluding a peace with France, on terms that would be either honourable or advantageous to England!

This motion was seconded by Sir William Milner, and supported by

Mr. Curwen, Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor, Mr. Nathaniel Jeffreys, and Mr. Sturt; and it was opposed by Mr. Hawkins Browne, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Wilbraham Bootle, Mr. Brandling, Mr. Pierrepoint, Mr. Burdon, Mr. Miles Peter Andrews, and Aldermen Curtis and Anderson. In the course of his philippic against Ministers, Mr. Curwen advanced the unconstitutional doctrine, that members of the House of Commons were bound to obey the directions of their immediate constituents; thereby betraying that gross ignorance of the constitutional character of a representative which has been before noticed and reproved in Mr. Combe. Neither the Ministers, nor any of the leading members of Opposition, took the smallest part in this debate, which terminated in a rejection of the motion, by two hundred and forty-two votes against fifty-nine.

In pursuance of the same object, which this and similar motions were calculated to promote, Mr. Fox, on the 23d of May, moved for a repeal of the two acts, which had passed the preceding year, for the better preservation of his Majesty's person and government against treasonable practices; and for the suppression of seditious meetings. The first of these acts, which continued to excite his heartfelt abhorrence,* he described as equally inconsistent with sound policy, and with the *tranquillity* and constitution of the realm.—He alluded to different acts which had passed in former periods of our history, in the reigns of Elizabeth, and of Charles the Second, for similar purposes, in order to show that they arose out of a consciousness that the conduct of the government was such as to provoke disaffection in the minds of the people.—In proof of this assertion, he remarked, that it was made highly penal to say, that Charles the Second was a Papist. Why? Because, in truth, he was so."† His speech was inflammatory, as usual; and, in the course of it, he took an opportunity of threatening the Scottish judges with future punishment, for having banished the patriots of Caledonia to the inhospitable clime of New South Wales; and of pronouncing a pompous eulogy on the virtues of Mr. Gerald, who had ended his days in that place of exile. How would

* Woodfall's Reports, May 23, p. 218.

† Idem Ibid. p. 219.

the Whigs of old have reprobated such language in a British House of Commons! With the example of France before him, Mr. Fox was not ashamed to assert, that no political opinions could be dangerous to a State, if they were suffered to be freely and openly promulgated!

The motion was opposed by Serjeant Adair, who defended the acts from the foul aspersions cast upon them by Mr. Fox; and, in allusion to his assertion respecting the trials in Scotland, that the persons convicted in that country had been sent to Botany Bay, for crimes arising out of an excess of love for the principles of the constitution, he asked whether Skirving, one of them, had not been Secretary to the British Convention? and whether it was excess of love for the principles of the British Constitution, which had led these men to adopt the language, and the forms, of that French Convention who had murdered their King, trampled upon the rights of the people, abolished the Christian religion, and set at defiance every principle of humanity and of justice?—Was it love for the constitution that induced them to adopt a resolution to resist acts of the Legislature which composed that constitution. He exposed the absurdity of supposing, that seditious Conventions, at a private meeting, would have as dangerous an effect as inflammatory harangues in popular assemblies.—He observed, that the alarm which the proceedings of certain societies had excited had been very great, and that the numerous meetings which had been held at different places, went to objects little short of destroying the constitution, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons.—*The consequence of these proceedings had been an attempt upon the sacred person of his Majesty.*† The good which the measures, then adopted, had produced, was obvious from existing facts. They who before were turbulent, were now, at least, quiet. They whom nothing could content, were prevented from propagating their mischievous doctrines. The Serjeant contended, that the repeal of these salutary acts, at present, which practically had been found to produce so much advantage, and were practically attended with no bad consequence, would be madness.

* Id. Ibid. p. 225.

† Woodfall's Reports, Serjeant Adair's speech, May 23, p. 231.

It was observed, by Colonel Fullarton, that, from what he had seen of the public conduct of Mr. Fox, he perceived, that the present motion was only an extension of that political web which he had been weaving for four years past, in which he had laboured to disgrace the country abroad, and to divide it at home. He had reprobated the war, when the French were already in arms against this country, and after they had threatened to rear the standard of their Republic on the ruins of the Tower. He had censured the alien bill; he had ridiculed, as visionaries, all who had expressed alarm for the safety of the constitution. In every instance, his language had been the same. When it was necessary to guard them against the designs of those whose hostility to the constitution had been proved, he had resisted every measure brought forward for its defence, and had proposed to perform wonders by conciliation; like the musician, who conceived the idea of appeasing all the feuds and discords of mankind by the irresistible charms of harmony.*

The motion was further opposed by Mr. Eastcourt, Lord Morpeth, Mr. Ellison, Major Elford, Sir Richard Glynn, Mr. Cholmondeley, and Mr. Pierrepoint; while none but Mr. Fox himself spoke in its defence. Two hundred and sixty voted against it, and fifty-two for it.

A few days previous to this discussion, Mr. Harrison, who had formerly moved for the imposition of partial taxes upon persons who held public situations, in addition to the taxes which they paid in common with the rest of their fellow-subjects, moved for the institution of an inquiry, with a view to ascertain, whether some relief to the burdens of the people, or provision, for further expence, might not be obtained by the reduction of useless places, sinecure offices, exorbitant fees, and other modes of retrenchment, in the expenditure of the public money. The speech, with which Mr. Harrison favoured the House upon the present occasion, differed but little from his former speeches on similar topics; and contained nothing worthy of historical record. It was answered, at considerable length, by Mr. Pitt, who opposed it, because no specific grounds had been alledged as its basis, and because it held out a delusion

* Idem Ibid. p. 234.

to the public, and could be productive of no good. Mr. Harrison had not pointed out any of the abuses which were said to exist in the performance of duties, or in payments for services not done for the public. It was very easy to give credit out of doors to the reports of abuses in sinecure places, a subject as much mistaken as any other of a public nature.—Mr. Pitt most properly reprobated the injustice of the idea, that the abilities and labour, devoted to the service of the public, should not be paid as well, and to the full as liberally, by the public, as those which were applied, in private life, to the interest of individuals, and which were rewarded by individual compensation. He entered into an examination of the various offices to which the motion referred, in order to shew that they were, generally speaking, not fit objects of retrenchment. As to those offices which related to state duties, many of them were attended with considerable expence for the maintenance of that appearance, and style of living, which it was necessary for those who held them to preserve. In the various offices connected with the army, the navy, and the revenue, the wages received were not higher than those which might be earned by an equal exertion in private life from individuals. There were certainly offices of another description, of less business, and with fewer duties, attached to them; but it was to be observed, that they arose out of our ancient manners, and were, in fact, the remnants of former times, attached to the splendour of Majesty, and attendant on the dignity of Monarchy. Such offices had ever existed; and such had been the custom of all countries which had been governed by Monarchs; it had been interwoven in our constitution; and formed an appendage to our mixed government; not for the display of idle parade; not for the loose gratification of idle vanity; but sanctioned by the authority of our ancestors, and continued for the dignified consistency of appearance in the King of a great and free people.—Mr. Pitt then adverted to offices of a more individious nature—sinecure places,—which, notwithstanding the ridicule and severity with which some members were disposed to treat them, were capable of defence on rational grounds. He briefly stated the principle on which they stood.—They stood on the invariable custom of the country, and were recognized by the solemn decisions of Parliament. He supposed it would not be denied, that the fair principle of honourable remuneration had ever been held a sacred

consideration; nor yet would it be contested, that a provision, and a retreat, for a life devoted to the public service, had ever been deemed a just and irresistible motive for conferring permanent rewards.—On this ground, Mr. Pitt examined the question of sinecure places, and contended that, as the necessity of rewarding public services was universally admitted, it would not be possible to devise a means of conferring such rewards, which would be subject to less abuse, or would excite less discontent.—He reminded the House, with what caution and circumspection Mr. Burke's memorable plan of economical reform was carried into effect; no change, nor modification, whatever, was effected, without the aid of incontrovertible evidence, and the assistance of positive fact; whereas Mr. Harrison's project was vague, comprehensive, and indefinite; without any fixed or specific object of pursuit, and without any marked principle to act upon. The tellers of the Exchequer, and several other offices, were retained, and recognized, by the resolution of Parliament, as necessary to be continued, and after a due consideration of the nature and tenure of sinecure places.

Mr. Pitt maintained, that sinecure offices were given in the nature of a freehold tenure. Parliament had expressly declared, that they would respect them as freehold property. And if, in answer to this solemn declaration, it was urged that Parliament might rescind their former resolutions, they might, by parity of reasoning, destroy every kind of property in the country. Mr. Pitt had already moved for a general investigation of the whole financial system of the country, with a view of ascertaining a plan for controlling the public expenditure; and the Committee, appointed for that purpose, would, of course, include in their researches every practicable scheme of reform. Mr. Harrison's motion, therefore, was as unnecessary as it was ill-timed;—for which reason Mr. Pitt moved the previous question.

The original motion was supported by Mr. Sheridan, who said every thing which his ingenuity suggested on the abuses of office; on the necessity of economy, and retrenchment; and on the propriety, in men of superior minds, of setting a *pure* example to the people;—subjects on which he spoke so feelingly, that it was naturally supposed, by the

country gentlemen, he spoke from *experience*. In his eccentric course, however, he wandered a little aside from the strict path of truth; and, in his personal attack on Mr. George Rose, charged him with holding places to the amount of £10,000 per annum; which drew from that gentleman a correction rather more severe than courtly. Indeed, Mr. Rose accused Mr. Sheridan of wilful and deliberate falsehood; he expressed his astonishment that Mr. Sheridan should renew assertions which, three years before, had experienced a formal contradiction from him; and he very justly remarked, that if he were not inclined, at that time, to take his word for the truth of his declarations, he had had sufficient opportunity since, of which it was his duty to avail himself, to make such inquiries as must have dispelled every doubt on the subject. Mr. Rose then proceeded solemnly to assure the House, that, of the offices which Mr. Sheridan had asserted were possessed by him, *three* he did not hold; two of them he had resigned a considerable time before, and one he never had held. The income of one was much less than Mr. Sheridan had stated it to be; and the income of the other two had been monstrously exaggerated. He acquired his office of Clerk to the House of Lords, by a grant from the Crown, in consequence of an address from that House, which stated him to be deserving of it, on account of services which he had rendered.

Mr. Rose expressed a wish to know, whether it was less honourable in him to possess a sinecure place than it was in Mr. Fox, who, during the time he was in administration, held three sinecure places.—One of these was the Clerkship of the Pells in Ireland, which was originally granted to Lord Holland, with the reversion to Mr. Fox.

Mr. Sheridan excused himself, by saying, that he had stated facts as he *understood* them to be;—but it is not a sufficient apology for a falsehood, that the person who advances it understood it to be true;—a man of honour and integrity will not assert, as a positive fact, any thing which he does not *know* to be true. The personal reflections, however, which Mr. Sheridan, according to his usual mode of debate, had introduced into the discussion, were further extended by Mr. Fox, who delivered his sentiments with great warmth on the subject. He charged Mr. Pitt and

Lord Grenville, with providing themselves with sinecure places, while they were loading the people with an accumulated weight of burthens. This charge, as it affected Mr. Pitt, was most unjust. Never did an interested motive pollute the mind of that upright statesman! Mr. Fox well knew, that when a sinecure place, of considerable value, had become vacant, and Mr. Pitt's friends, knowing the confined state of his circumstances, pressed him to take it himself, as all former Ministers had done, and the father of Mr. Fox among others, he steadily refused; and gave it to Colonel Barrè, the friend of Mr. Fox, on condition that he should resign a pension which had been granted him;—by which the public gained three thousand a year. He afterwards, indeed, accepted the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, on the death of Lord Guildford; but this could not, in strictness, be termed a sinecure, since there were some duties, though certainly few, annexed to it. Be that as it may, let the page of history be searched, and not a Minister will be found who was better entitled to signal and permanent rewards from the the public. Mr. Pitt had forsaken a lucrative profession, in which his knowledge and his talents peculiarly qualified him not merely to shine, but to attain to distinguished pre-eminence, and to acquire a splendid fortune, in order to devote his time and abilities to the public. The services which he had rendered to the public, whatever Mr. Fox and his present associates might think of them, the nation at large had felt, appreciated, and acknowledged. And there was not a man of liberal sentiment in the kingdom, who thought them too highly rewarded, by the place which Mr. Fox, with a littleness of soul, which, with all his failings, he seldom displayed; and with an inconsistency of principle, but too common with him; now reproached him with having taken.

Mr. Fox next alluded to the removal of Mr. Aust from the Foreign Office, though he was eminently qualified for the situation, merely to provide for Mr. Canning, who could not do the business of the office till he was instructed in it by Mr. Aust. * He then attacked Mr. Rose for receiving the salary of Clerk to the House of Lords, while the duty was

* Woodfall's Reports, March 13, p. 347.

performed by another; and for securing the reversion for his son. It was, he said, most scandalous and enormous. * These last words drew a severe reply from Mr. Rose, who observed, that he deemed it no more scandalous in him to obtain that reversion for his son, than it was in the father of Mr. Fox to obtain the reversion of two patent places for him.—Nor did he believe that there would be any thing more scandalous in the mode by which the reversion might be disposed of, than there was in the way those other reversions had been disposed of by Mr. Fox; who, it was understood, had sold them to pay a gaming debt. The interposition of the Speaker, at length, put an end to these personal altercations, so unworthy of a Legislative Assembly. But Mr. Canning deemed it proper to prevent the House from being misled by Mr. Fox's statement respecting him, by informing them that the public had not been encumbered with any additional expence on his account. Mr. Aust had been appointed to other offices more lucrative; but *his* appointment had added no new expence to the public burthens. If sordid views had been his object, he would rather have accepted those offices which Mr. Aust then held, than the station which he himself occupied. † The previous question, moved by Mr. Pitt, was carried by one hundred and sixty-nine votes against seventy-seven.

During the prevalence of these party-contentions, while the leaders of Opposition, instead of uniting in defence of their country against an inveterate and formidable enemy, were intent on producing divisions, by exciting an odium against the government, and by incessant complaints of imaginary grievances, an evil of a most serious nature, which struck at the very vitals of our national independence and safety, had been secretly spreading, and had reached to the fullness of maturity. A spirit of discontent had been artfully engendered, and very widely diffused, among the seamen in our fleets. Several of the disaffected Irish had entered the navy; and persons who were not bred to the sea, but who were placed in superior stations in life, had enlisted in the service, for the diabolical purpose of infecting the minds of the sailors with revolutionary principles. It was easy for such persons to discover any

* Idem Ibid. p. 348. † Id. Ibid. p. 350.

grievances, real or imaginary, under which the seamen might labour, or suppose themselves to labour; and it was no difficult matter to magnify these into copious sources of discontent. The projectors of this dreadful scheme proceeded with such consummate art, that the train was actually laid, and the explosion ready to take place, before the smallest suspicion of a mine being prepared was entertained, either by the Admiralty, or by the officers themselves. In the months of February and March, indeed, several petitions, for increase of wages, had been transmitted to Lord Howe, by the sailors of different ships, which excited his Lordship's attention, from the singular circumstance of the uniformity of language, sentiment, and writing, which proved them all to be the production of one person. He made inquiries of the commanding officer at Portsmouth, but was informed, that not the smallest discontent had appeared in the fleet. And the Admiralty, to whom his Lordship sent the petitions, seemed to think lightly of them, and no further notice was taken. On the return of the Channel-fleet to Portsmouth, a secret correspondence was settled and maintained between all the ships of which it was composed; and, at length, an unanimous agreement was entered into by the whole of the crews,—that no ship should lift an anchor till they had obtained a full and complete redress of grievances. In pursuance of this agreement, when Lord Bridport, on the fifteenth of April, gave the signal of preparation for sea, instead of obeying it, the crew of the Queen-Charlotte gave three cheers, the signal for uniting, which were echoed through the fleet.

Every effort of the officers to quell this mutinous spirit proved fruitless. The system was formed;—the seamen became masters of the fleet;—two delegates from each ship met in the Admiral's cabin; an oath of fidelity was administered to every sailor, and death was the settled consequence of desertion from the common cause.

On the eighteenth of April, the mutinous delegates drew up, and signed, a petition to the House of Commons, and another to the Admiralty. In the first of these, they reminded the House, that their wages were fixed in the reign of Charles the Second, and that, although all the necessaries of life had increased, since that period, at least thirty

per cent. they had not received any augmentation of pay;—on which account they were not able to make a proper provision for their families. They expressed their jealousy at the augmented pay of the army, and the increase of the out-pensioners of Chelsea College; while they remained neglected, and the out-pensioners of Greenwich had only seven pounds per annum. These grievances they recommended to the attention of the House in general terms.

'In their petition to the Admiralty, they entered into a more detailed statement of their grievances, and preferred specific demands, and assumed a tone of greater decision. They asserted, that "their worth to the nation," and their laborious industry in defence of their country, deserved better encouragement than any which they had experienced. But they professed to advert to their "Good Services," only to put the Nation and the Admiralty in mind of the respect which was due to them, and disavowed all intention of forsaking the cause of the British Crown. After referring to the insufficiency of their pay, they stated their demands under five heads:—I. That they should have more and better provisions; and that the same *measures* might be used in the Navy as were used in the Merchant service.—II. That no flour should be served while in harbour, or in a British port.—III. That better care should be taken of the sick, in respect of attendance, and necessaries; and that the latter should be secured from embezzlement.—IV. That they might have liberty to go on shore, when in harbour, and after their return from sea, within certain boundaries; which they considered as "a natural request, and congenial to the heart of man;" and certainly to them, whom the Admiralty made "the boast of being the guardians of the land."—And, V. That the pay of men wounded in action should be continued until they should be cured and discharged.

Such was the substance of their claims, which appear to have nothing unreasonable, or improper, in themselves; though certainly the mode of preferring them was most reprehensible. The Ministers and the Admiralty, were reduced to the most unpleasant situation; and had, indeed, only a choice of difficulties. On the one hand, to refuse compliance with the demands of men, who were in possession of our fleet, would

be to incur danger of which it was impossible to foresee the consequences, or to ascertain the extent.—And on the other, the danger of establishing a fatal precedent, by yielding to requisitions, enforced by armed men, who set the lawful authority of their officers at defiance, and were in a state of active mutiny, was almost equally dangerous. The difficulty was further increased, in an extreme degree, by the peculiar circumstances of the period at which the insurrection occurred. We were in the midst of a war with a vigilant and desperate enemy, who not only threatened to invade our country, but to destroy our constitution, and to subvert our liberties and laws. The intelligence of these discontents could not fail to invigorate their efforts, and to accelerate their schemes, for the execution of this favourite object.—And, with the fleet in possession of the mutineers, there would be no means of resisting their attempt to affect a landing on our coasts. While this circumstance increased our danger, it aggravated the guilt of the offenders. The public were greatly, and justly, alarmed; and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl Spencer, with two other of the Lords, Lord Arden and Admiral Young, had repaired to Portsmouth on the first information of the mutiny.

Yielding to the imperious necessity of the case, these commissioners immediately answered the petition of the seamen; and instructed the Commander of the Fleet, Lord Bridport, to inform them, that, having the strongest desire to attend to all their complaints, and to grant them every just and reasonable redress, they had taken their grievances into their serious consideration, and had resolved to recommend to his Majesty, to propose to Parliament to increase the wages of seamen, in the following proportions:—To add four shillings per month to the wages of petty officers and able seamen; three shillings per month to the wages of ordinary seamen; and two shillings per month to the wages of landmen.—They had also resolved, that wounded seamen should continue to receive their pay until their wounds were healed, or until, being declared unserviceable, they should receive a pension, or be received into the Royal Hospital at Greenwich. The commissioners of the Admiralty declared, that their reliance on the good disposition, loyalty, and courage, of the seamen, had induced them the more readily

to adopt these resolutions, in order that they might have, as early as possible, an opportunity of proving the sincerity of their professions, by returning to their duty, as it might be necessary that the fleet should speedily put to sea, to meet the enemy.

These deliberating delegates of mutiny were not, however, to be so easily satisfied.—The last appeal to their patriotism, far from producing the intended effect, only served to raise their spirits, and to increase their pretensions. Emboldened by the success of the mode of application which they had adopted; and feeling their power, they demurred to the terms proposed by the Admiralty.—The next day, April the nineteenth, they sent a formal reply, in which they demanded the abolition of the distinction between seamen and landmen; and that no other distinction should be made, than that between able and ordinary seamen. They required, that the pay of the marines should be increased as well as their own; that the pensions at Greenwich should be raised to ten pounds; and that, in order to create an adequate fund for the purpose, every seaman in the merchant service should pay a shilling a month, instead of sixpence; and that the same regulation should be extended to the seamen in the service of the East India Company. They renewed their demand, in respect of provisions; and, lastly, declared their determination *not to lift an anchor* until all these grievances had been redressed, and an act of indemnity passed. And they concluded, in the language of revolt, "*And the grievances of particular ships* MUST BE *redressed.*"

On the twentieth, Lord Bridport was instructed to inform the seamen, that the Board of Admiralty being desirous to grant them every request that could, with any degree of reason, be complied with, had resolved to recommend it to the King, that an addition of pay of five shillings and sixpence per month should be made to the wages of petty officers and seamen, which would make the wages of able seamen one shilling per day, clear of all deductions; an addition of four shillings and sixpence per month to the wages of every ordinary seamen; and an addition of three shillings and sixpence to the wages of every landman; and that none of the allowances made to the marines when on shore should be dropped on their being embarked on board any of his Majesty's ships;

and that they had also resolved, that all seamen, marines, and others, serving in his Majesty's ships, should have the full allowance of provisions, without any deductions for leakage or waste. The Admiral was ordered to communicate this determination to the Captain of each ship in the fleet, who was to inform his crew, that, should they be insensible to the very liberal offers now made to them, and persist in their present disobedience, they must no longer expect to enjoy those benefits to which, by their former good conduct, they were entitled;—in such case, all the men, at that time on board the fleet, at Spithead, should be incapable of receiving smart-money, or pension, from the Chest of Chatham, or of being admitted into the Royal Hospital at Greenwich; and that they must be answerable for the dreadful consequences which would necessarily result from their continuing to transgress the rules of the service, in open violation of the laws of their country.—On the other hand, perfect forgiveness, and oblivion, of all that had passed, was promised to every ship's company, who, within one hour after these resolutions should have been communicated to them, should return to their duty in every particular, and should cease to hold further intercourse with any man who might continue in a state of disobedience and mutiny.

But even this concession, ample and liberal as it was, not proving sufficient to satisfy the mutineers, on the twenty-first of April, three Admirals, Gardner, Colpoys and Poole, went on board the Queen Charlotte to talk to the delegates, who explicitly told them, that they would agree to nothing which should not be sanctioned by Parliament, and guaranteed by the King's Proclamation. Admiral Gardner was so enraged at this mutinous and seditious declaration, that he seized one of the delegates by the collar, and swore he would have them all hanged, and every fifth man throughout the fleet.—This honest impulse of indignation, however, had nearly cost him his life. After this interview, the crews of the different ships proceeded to load the guns, and to adopt every measure of preparation, either for offensive or defensive operations.

On the twenty-second of April, the delegates again addressed the Lords of the Admiralty, expressed their gratitude for their increase of pay, but declared their final resolution, not to lift an anchor till every

grievance, which they had stated, had been fully redressed, and the King's pardon obtained. At length, it was deemed expedient to comply with their demands, and the Royal pardon for all their past transgressions was accordingly issued. They then returned to their duty; but, on the seventh of May, they again became mutinous from doubts, as they declared, that the promises made to them would not be fulfilled. Lord Howe was then sent to them, and he soon succeeded in quelling their groundless suspicions, in bringing them back to their duty, and in restoring them to order and discipline. The fleet at Plymouth, which had followed the example of that at Portsmouth in disobedience, followed it also in its return to order.

The additional yearly expence, occasioned by these concessions, amounted to £436,000; and for such a portion of this sum as would meet the expence for the remainder of the present year, Mr. Pitt moved, in the House of Commons, on the ninth of May. He then deprecated all discussion as only calculated to produce irritation. Indeed, this suggestion was so obviously proper, that it could not be conceived that a difference of opinion could subsist upon the subject. Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan, however, thought otherwise, and exerted themselves to provoke a debate, by accusing the Minister of having been guilty of criminal neglect, in not sooner submitting the measure to the House. When it is considered, that only three weeks had elapsed from the day on which the first appearance of a mutinous disposition had manifested itself, to the period of the present application, the frivolity and injustice of such a charge must be evident. The House paid no attention to it, and the vote passed without a dissentient voice. Indeed, as Mr. Pitt had been already accused by the party, of having been the author of the attack on the King in the park, he might think himself very fortunate, on the present occasion, in having escaped the charge of exciting the mutiny in the Fleet. The Opposition, however, were resolved to criminate him, in some way or other, and, therefore, the next day, Mr. Whitbread, who concluded a speech in which he said a great deal about ministerial guilt, and condign punishment, formally moved, that Mr. Pitt, in having so long delayed to present the estimate of the sum necessary for defraying the expences of an increase of pay, and also for the proposed

issue of a full allowance of provisions to the seamen and marines of his Majesty's navy, had been guilty of a gross breach of duty, and deserved the censure of the House.—It was clearly proved, by Mr. Pitt, that no delay which could have been avoided had taken place. And he also shewed the absurdity of making him responsible for a transaction with which he had less concern that with almost any other public business. This objection induced Mr. Whitbread to alter his motion, so as to direct his censure against the whole administration collectively; although, with equal absurdity and inconsistency, he declared, at the same time, that he directed his censure, and would therefore point his accusation, against Mr. Pitt.* A debate ensued, which ended in a rejection of the proposed motion, by 237 votes against 63.

Hopes were now entertained, that order was perfectly restored in the navy, and that no further disturbance would occur. But scarcely had the public time for mutual congratulations on their narrow escape from the most imminent danger, before their satisfaction was again interrupted, by the intelligence of a fresh mutiny having broken out on board the ships at the Nore. On the twenty-second of May, the crews took possession of their respective ships, and betrayed a much more malignant disposition than had been manifested by their comrades at Portsmouth. The mutiny here assumed a more serious and alarming aspect. The demands of the men were more extensive in their nature, and urged with more insolence and decision. On the morning of the sixth of June, the ships at the Nore were joined by four others of the line, and one sloop, forming part of Lord Duncan's fleet. Delegates were chosen, and a man, of the name of Richard Parker, who had received some education, which had improved parts naturally good, and given a greater degree of decision to a character naturally bold and resolute, was selected as their chief.

Admiral Buckner, who commanded at the Nore, was directed by the Admiralty to inform the men that their demands were such as the rules of the service would not allow them to comply with; but that, if they would immediately return to their duty, they should receive the King's

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, May 10th, p. 81.

pardon for their past misconduct. This offer was rejected, and Parker informed the Admiral, that the seamen were resolved to keep possession of the fleet, until the Lords of the Admiralty had repaired to the Nore, and redressed their grievances. Lord Spencer, Lord Arden, and Admiral Young, accordingly, repaired to Sheerness, without loss of time, and held a board, at which Parker and the other delegates attended;—but their behaviour was so outrageously indecent, that there appeared not the smallest prospect of reducing them to obedience, by reasoning and persuasion. A proclamation was now issued, offering pardon to all such as should immediately return to their duty; and the buoys were ordered to be removed from the mouth of the Thames, and the adjoining coast, by way of precaution, to increase the difficulty of sailing away with the ships; and as the mutineers had manifested an intention of bombarding Sheerness, adequate means of resistance were provided, and furnaces, for heating balls, were kept in constant readiness.

The mutineers, meanwhile, proceeded to acts of open rebellion;—they stopped two store ships in the river and seized their cargoes; moored four of their ships across the Thames to intercept all vessels, on their way to and from London; and published their design of cutting off all communication with the capital, as a means of enforcing compliance with their demands. But after persisting, for some time, in these mutinous proceedings, they found that not only the community at large, but their own comrades at Plymouth and Portsmouth, reprobated their conduct, and called for their punishment. Disheartened alike, by the knowledge of this fact, and by the firmness of Government in resisting their claims, great divisions took place among them, and several ships forsook the confederacy and returned to their duty. The flag of rebellion, which had hitherto been kept flying on board the Sandwich, was lowered; and order and tranquillity were happily restored without violence, except between some of the ships' crews, among whom a division of sentiment produced some contest and bloodshed. Parker, the ringleader of the mutineers, was seized, with some of the most active of the delegates; and afterwards tried, on board the Neptune. After a most patient and minute investigation, Parker was condemned, and suffered the sentence of the law. Some of the culprits were sentenced

to milder punishments; but many others, who were condemned to die, were kept in prison till after the victory obtained by Admiral Duncan over the French fleet, when his Majesty issued a general pardon.

During the existence of the mutiny, his Majesty had communicated the event to Parliament by a Royal Message, on the first of June, in which he recommended it to their consideration to make more effectual provision for the prevention and punishment of all traitorous attempts to excite sedition and mutiny in the navy; or to withdraw any part of his forces, by sea or land, from their duty and allegiance to him, and from that obedience and discipline which were so important to the prosperity and the safety of the British empire. This Message was taken into consideration the following day, in the House of Commons, when the address moved by Mr. Pitt received the unanimous sanction of the House. On this occasion, Mr. Sheridan stood forward, with true English spirit, in support of the address, and in reprobation of the conduct of the mutineers.—He had, at first, been induced to think that they had acted under the impulse of momentary delusion and mistake; but their subsequent and continued conduct had convinced him, that something more than delusion had operated on their minds, and that a rooted spirit of disobedience had taken place of those manly and loyal sentiments with which they had been, on former occasions, constantly animated. If there were, indeed, a rot in the wooden walls of old England, our decay could not be very distant. The question, as it evidently appeared to his view, was not about this, or that concession, but whether the country should be laid prostrate at the feet of France? It was, in fact, a matter of no moment, whether it was laid prostrate at the feet of Monarchical or of Republican France; for still the event would be equally fatal, equally destructive.*—*O! si sic omnia!*—Had Mr. Sheridan's eloquence been always exerted in so worthy, so patriotic a cause, with what pleasure, what pride, would the historian record its beauties and effects!

After the address was carried, Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in a

* Woodfall's Reports, June 2, p. 432.

bill for the better prevention and punishment of all traitorous attempts to excite sedition and mutiny in his Majesty's service; or to withdraw any part of his Majesty's forces, by sea or land, from their duty and allegiance to him, and from that obedience and discipline which are so important to the prosperity and safety of the British empire. He entered into some details, in order to prove the existence of a settled design to produce that which it was the immediate object of this bill to prevent and punish;—of one active, uniform, and wide-extended, plan of sedition to seduce his Majesty's forces from their duty and allegiance. The discontents did not originate with any single individual; they were not confined to one corner of the kingdom; nor contracted within one circle of complaint; but they had manifested themselves in many detached parts, were working, at the same time, and in different places, on the same principles, and branched out into so many fresh ramifications of complaint, that no person could foresee where they would end. Many and various had been the attempts to excite this affection, by false, insidious, and calumniating means, sometimes provoking rebellion, by emissaries at secret hours, sometimes by misrepresentations and other artifices, and at others by dispersing hand-bills wherever opportunity presented itself, or any expectation of success in their pursuits could be indulged, to detach the soldiers also from their duty; so that the engines of sedition had been no less busily and unremittingly persevering on shore, where, to the honour of the soldiery, they had failed in their effects, than in the navy, where they had unfortunately prevailed. Here, then, it was necessary to connect the discontents on board the fleet with the other species of sedition on shore, to pronounce them to be the operations of one fatal and too well digested system; for that they were not the spontaneous combinations of the seamen, that they were not the effects of accident, nor the effusion of one solitary and unconnected discontent, was demonstrated by the conformity of transactions at Newcastle, at Nottingham, at Maidstone, at Canterbury, at Salisbury, and at many other places where the same species of hand-bills had been scattered and diffused, accompanied by rumours, echoed and re-echoed, of the most false and scandalous nature, and where, in some unhappy instances, a few deluded, or evil-minded, people had set the same melancholy example. A more studied system could not offer itself to the thought of

any man; a more practicable plan of treason could never be attempted to be carried into execution. From such specimens, therefore, it was evident, the sedition was extensive enough to prove it to be systematic; and dangerous enough to make precaution requisite.*

Mr. Pitt made some judicious observations on the origin and nature of our penal laws, which, in their present state, were incompetent to recognize such machinations, and to punish such delinquents as these; and, consequently, to deter men from the commission of such offences. Look at the statute laws, their origin, and extent. Had they ever endeavoured to search out every possible offence, and to provide for its prevention and punishment?—Certainly not. The statute laws of this country were not the result of an original, deliberative, systematic, code, but the natural effect of the commission of crimes, arising from their frequency and heinousness, and proportioning the penalties accordingly. They grew up from the offences which they afterwards controlled, and their character and complection shewed them to be the produce of different periods. What then, he asked, would be the principle of any one's argument, who should contend that, because no particular law, nor any particular penalties, had been yet provided by the legislature, none should be provided?—His argument would, in such a case, apply just as much, if he were to contend that no law or punishment should be in force against parricide, because, by referring to the statute books, he might find, that there was a time when no such law or penalty existed.

The bill passed through its various stages, in both Houses, with a degree of expedition, suited to the emergency which called for it.—By this law, all persons, who should endeavour to seduce either soldiers or sailors from their duty, or instigate them to mutinous practices, or commit any act of mutiny, or form any mutinous assemblies, should be deemed a felon; and, on conviction, suffer death. This was a temporary law, limitted in duration to one month after the commencement of the next session of Parliament. Another bill was passed immediately after,

* Woodfall's Reports, Mr. Pitt's Speech, June 2, p. 438, 439.

the object of which was to restrain all intercourse between the discontented crews of the ships at the Nore, and the people on shore, and for the suppression of mutiny and rebellion on board those ships. This bill, also, passed very speedily into a law. It annexed the punishment of felony to the act of holding any intercourse with the ships then in a state of mutiny, after a certain proclamation should have been issued and read in the dock-yards; and it deprived those sailors, who, after the date of that proclamation, should not return to their duty, of all arrears of pay and allowances, and of all benefit from Greenwich Hospital, and the Chest at Chatham. After the additional allowance made to the seamen, (and that part of it which related to provisions, was far from being necessary, as it was notorious, after it had been granted, that the portion of bread allowed was greater than the men could consume*) it would have been equally impolitic and unjust, not to admit the application of the same reasons to the army. The soldiers had, during this trying period, conducted themselves in a most exemplary manner, resisting every attempt to seduce them from their duty, and bringing those who made such attempts to punishment;—they had, therefore, every possible claim to an increase of pay; which was, accordingly, proposed by the Secretary of War, and unanimously adopted by Parliament.

In the interval, between the different discussions on these topics of primary importance, Mr. Grey made another effort to persuade the House to adopt a plan of Parliamentary Reform, which he submitted to them on the 26th of May. The substance of this project was to increase the county members from ninety-two to one hundred and thirteen;—and to change, or rather to extend, the qualification of electors, from freeholders to copy-holders, and leaseholders paying a certain rent. All other members he proposed to be returned, in future, by householders alone; by the adoption of which proposal, it was evident, all the exclusive rights of corporate bodies, respecting the

* I saw a letter from an active and intelligent officer in the navy, (a post captain) soon after the mutiny, in which it was stated, that the superabundance of bread delivered to the men, in consequence of the new regulations, was such, that they could not eat it, but threw a great deal of it overboard; so that a quantity of bread was frequently seen in the wakes of the different ships.

election of representatives, would be destroyed. He suggested also the propriety of altering the duration of Parliaments from seven years to three. The subject had been so frequently discussed as to leave little room for novelty of argument. One only point, pressed by Mr. Grey, requires notice here. He accused Mr. Pitt of having neglected, when in power, the promises which he had made, in respect of the question of Parliamentary Reform, when out of power.* Nothing could be more unfounded than this charge; for it has been shewn, that Mr. Pitt, after he came into power, moved the question of Parliamentary Reform, though, at a subsequent period, he saw reason to change his opinion on the subject, and candidly explained both the change itself, and the reason on which it was founded, to the House. He could not, therefore, be charged with a breach of promise, without manifest injustice, and a palpable violation of truth.

Mr. Grey's motion was seconded by Mr. Erskine. Mr. Pitt, in an answer of some length, vindicated his own consistency, and deprecated reform, at the present crisis, as only calculated to open the way to revolution. Mr. Fox supported the motion; and, in a very long speech, took a comprehensive view of all the objections which had ever been opposed to similar propositions for a reform in Parliament, which to him appeared necessary to restore to the people rights of which they had been robbed, and to preserve the constitution from ruin. Ninety-two members concurred in opinion with Mr. Grey, and two hundred and fifty-six condemned his proposals.

In the House of Lords, a formal attack was made upon Ministers, by the Duke of Bedford, who had adopted all the opinions of Mr. Fox, respecting their principles, their abilities, and their conduct; and who laboured, though in vain, to impress the House with the same sense of them which he entertained himself. He entered into a long review of their proceedings, from the commencement of the war, and imputed to them every disaster which the Allies had sustained, and every calamity which Europe had experienced.—His Grace, in short, considered them

* Woodfall's Reports, Mr. Grey's Speech, May 26th, p. 266.

as despicable in talents; impotent in resources; and wicked in intention. Such were the sum and substance of his speech! A stranger, who had heard his philippic, might have been induced to believe, that his Grace had mistaken the place in which he was speaking, and supposed that he was delivering an oration in one of the French Councils, and was aiming his attacks at the Ministers and Directors of the Republic. Consistently with the sentiments which he had avowed, the Duke moved an address to the King, beseeching him to dismiss such unworthy Ministers from his Councils. The House rejected the motion, which comprehended various objects connected with this main point, by *ninety-one* votes against *fourteen*.

During the session, a bill had passed the Lower House, to allow Roman Catholics, and Protestant Dissenters, to act as Officers in the Supplementary Militia. But when it was introduced, at the close of the session, to the House of Peers, it was opposed by Lord Kenyon, and the Bishop of Rochester, as involving very important considerations, which required the most mature and deliberate discussion; and as it was impossible, from the advanced state of the session, that it should now experience such discussion, the former of these noblemen moved, that the consideration of it should be adjourned for three months. This motion gave rise to a debate, in which the Duke of Norfolk (who had abjured the errors of the Church of Rome) declared himself attached, from conviction, to the Church of England, as the best form of Christianity. The Catholic religion, he observed, had been overthrown in this country, by the disgust occasioned by its practical corruptions, and by the abuses arising out of a tyrannical hierarchy.* But he accused the Church of England of harbouring a spirit of persecution. Lord Grenville rose to vindicate the established Church against this imputation, which, he strongly and truly insisted, had not the slightest foundation in fact. The very reverse of intolerance, his Lordship observed, had been the characteristic of the Protestant church, from the period of the reformation to the present day. It was its liberality, its candour, its willingness to extend toleration, wherever it could be extended with

* Woodfall's Reports, July 11, p. 558.

safety, to the constitution, that had formed its grand characteristic, and distinguished it from the bigotry, the intolerant and persecuting spirit of the church of Rome.* Lord Kenyon's motion was carried, and the bill was consequently lost.

Before the session closed, Mr. Pitt applied to the House of Commons for a vote of credit, to the amount of half a million, to meet any unforeseen expences which might occur during the recess; and, at the same time, he mentioned the probable necessity of affording some relief to our faithful Ally, the Queen of Portugal. On the 20th of July, the King prorogued the Parliament.

* Idem, Ibid. p. 556.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Views and resources of the French—Failure of their attempt to invade Ireland—Renewal of that project—They establish a correspondence with the Irish Rebels—Means taken by the British Cabinet to counteract their designs—Defeat of the Spanish Fleet, off Cape St. Vincent—Signal bravery of Commodore Nelson—Remarkable omission in the official letter of Sir John Jervis to the Admiralty—Decisive victory over the Dutch Fleet by Admiral Duncan—Campaign in Italy—Great superiority of the French Army—Infamous Proclamation of Buonaparté—Gallant resistance of an Austrian detachment, at Belluna—Passage of the Tagliamento by the French—The Austrians retreat—Cowardly surrender of Gradiska—Operations in the Tyrol—French successful in every quarter—Buonaparté proposes Peace to the Archduke—Motives of such proposal—Suspension of Arms—Divisions between the Directory, and the two Councils—Peace of Campo Formio—Reflections on that Peace—Characters of the Directory—Their conduct—Despised by the People—They court the Jacobins—Improved principles of the new Councils—Their marked enmity to the Directory—Plan of the Directory for their destruction—Many members of the councils are seized by the troops, and transported by the Directory—Mr. Pitt resolves again to propose Peace to the French—Negotiations at Lisle—Liberal propositions of the British Cabinet—Duplicity and equivocation of the French—Difficulties and delays promoted by the Directory—Their motives for such conduct—The Irish Rebels send Agents to Lisle—Inadmissible demands of the French Plenipotentiaries—Rupture of the Negotiation—Meeting of Parliament—Debates on the Negotiation at Lisle—Joint Address of the two Houses to the King—Opposed by Sir John Sinclair—Mr. Pitt's Speech—He paints the horrors of a French Invasion—Lord Temple and Doctor Lawrence express their joy at the failure of the Negotiation—The address carried unanimously—Secession of Mr. Fox, and his associates, from Parliament—Observations on the reasons assigned for their conduct—A secession unjustifiable and unconstitutional—False notions of Mr. Sheridan on the subject—Matters of Finance—Tax upon Income—Mr. Fox, and his followers, attend the House to oppose it—Their inflammatory Speeches—Inconsistency of Mr. Sheridan exposed—They refuse to grant any supplies until the Ministers shall be dismissed—Mr. Tierney declares, that, as an honest man, he will not vote a Shilling to the Ministers—Mr. Pitt's answer to Mr. Fox—Proves Mr. Fox's secession to be a violation of Duty—His probable motive to inflame the minds of the people—Bill passed for imposing the tax upon Income, by one hundred and ninety-six votes against seventy-one—Reflections on the Bill—Insufficiency of the criterion for ascertaining the amount of income—The bill violently opposed by Lord Holland, in the House of Lords—Both Lord Holland and Mr. Fox, at a subsequent period, adopted the very principle, and supported the very measure, which they now condemned and reprobated—The Bill becomes a Law.

[1797-1798.] The French Directory, after their victories in Italy, in the campaign of 1796, entertained the most sanguine hopes of realizing their favourite plan of dictating peace to the Emperor at the gates of his capital; and, at the same time, of making such efforts on the ocean as would deprive England of her boasted superiority, on her favourite element. These hopes were not so visionary as most of the regicidal projects of the Republican rulers. Their ability to oppose England by sea was greatly increased by the complete power which they had acquired over the navies of Spain and Holland, which navies were, for all purposes of active hostility, identified with their own. It was, in consequence, intended to form a junction of the fleets of the three countries, which amounted to more than seventy sail of the line; to put a large military force on board; and to make a descent upon Ireland, or upon some part of the British coast. The French had, indeed, endeavoured to carry their plan, for the invasion of Ireland, into effect, at the close of 1796, when thirteen sail of the line had been sent for that purpose; but being dispersed in a storm, the fleet suffered considerably, and was obliged to return to port, with the loss of one line of battle ship. It was now, however, intended to execute this favourite plan upon a much larger scale; and, by the weight of numbers, to bear down the British fleet as they had done the Austrian armies.

They were the more confident of success, if they could effect a landing in Ireland, as they knew that country to be in a state of disaffection, and ripe for revolt; indeed, they maintained a regular correspondence with the leaders of the discontented party, who had authorized agents resident at Paris. The Directory, however, had not appreciated the difficulty of bringing the three fleets to act together; they had not calculated upon the activity of the English, stimulated as it was by every motive of self-preservation, in preventing the desired junction of this great maritime force, destined for their destruction. The British government, fully aware of the hostile designs of the enemy, had adopted every necessary precaution for rendering them abortive. While two competent fleets, in the Channel and in the Mediterranean, watched the different ports of France, Admiral Jervis was stationed, with fifteen sail of the line, off the coast of Spain; and Admiral Duncan, with ten

sail of the line, cruized off the Texel, to watch the motions of the Dutch.

The first of these fleets that ventured to sea was the Spanish, which, to the number of twenty-seven vessels of the line, was descried by the English in the night of the 13th of February, a few leagues from Cape St. Vincent. At half past eleven, in the following morning, the British Admiral was so fortunate as to come up with them, and, by able seamenship, to bring them to action, with great advantage. The Spanish ships were scattered, by which means the English were able to attack them before they could be collected, or formed, in a regular line; and passing through their fleet, with great rapidity, they separated nine sail from the rest. The very scanty account* which appears, in the official letter of Sir John Jervis to the Admiralty, leaves all the particulars of this action to be collected from other, and less authentic, sources. It is known, however, that the British ships which were principally engaged, supported, in a distinguished manner, the national character for skill, conduct, and courage. Commodore Nelson, in the Captain, fought, for some time, three ships of superior force;—he boarded the San Nicholas, of eighty-four guns, and made another first-rate ship yield to his intrepid spirit, and superior prowess. The action lasted till five in the evening, when four sail of the line, two of a hundred and twelve guns, one of eighty-four, and one of seventy-four, remained in the hands of the English; while the Spanish Admiral, with a force still superior, having twenty-three sail of the line left, and now collected in close order,

* The whole account of the action itself is compressed in six lines, which I transcribe: "Passing through their fleet, in a line formed with the utmost celerity, tacked, and thereby separated one-third from the main body, after a partial cannonade, which prevented their rejunction till the evening; and, by the very great exertions of the ships which had the good fortune to arrive up with the enemy, on the larboard tack, the ships, named in the margin, were captured, and the action ceased about five o'clock in the evening." Not a word is said of any particular ships, or of any particular officers, having distinguished themselves, though never was greater distinction gained in any action than by individuals in this; and the usual acknowledgement to officers and men, for their efforts, and services, on the occasion, were wholly omitted, although the omission stands without a parallel in the annals of the British navy.

was glad to retire from the scene of his defeat. The loss of the English amounted, in killed and wounded, to three hundred; two hundred and twenty-one of which belonged to four ships, the Blenheim, Captain Frederick; the Captain, Commodore Nelson, and Captain Miller; the Excellent, Captain Collingwood; and the Culloden, Captain Trowbridge. In the four Spanish ships that were taken, no less than six-hundred and three men were killed and wounded. From the relative situations of the two fleets, and from the manœuvres of the English, the action was necessarily partial on both sides; and several of the British ships took but a small part in it, and, of course, suffered but little. In the Admiral's ship, the Victory, there was but one man killed, and only five were wounded; and in the Diadem, there was not one killed. This specimen of the reception which they were destined to experience was sufficient to convince the enemy that their hopes, of ruining Great Britain, however well founded in appearance, were not likely to be realized. If any doubts, however, on the subject, still remained on the minds of the Directory, another event occurred, some months after, which was well calculated to remove them.

The equinoctial gales having compelled Admiral Duncan to quit his station, and to return to Yarmouth to repair his ships, the Dutch commander, De Winter, embraced the opportunity to sail from the Texel, in order to join the Brest fleet. But the British Admiral, having received information of his motions by the cruizers which he had left off the Dutch coast, hastened in pursuit of him. His first object was to place his squadron between the Dutch fleet and the entrance of the Texel, so as to prevent the possibility of their returning, without being brought to action. On the morning of the 11th of October, he chaced the Dutch fleet, and about noon came up with them, about nine miles from the shore. The action commenced about forty minutes past twelve. Admiral Duncan, in the Venerable, broke through the enemy's line, and, with his division, brought their van to close action, which was maintained with the greatest gallantry, on both sides, for two hours and a half, when all the masts of the Dutch Admiral's ship went by the board; still, however, the brave Dutchman continued to fight, in the most gallant style, till, overpowered by numbers, and having lost more than half his

crew, he was compelled to strike, and his colours were carried on board the Venerable. About the same time, the Dutch Vice-Admiral, Bloys, surrendered to Vice-Admiral Onslow; and at four in the afternoon the action ceased, when ten sail of the line, and one frigate, had surrendered to the English. The remainder of the Dutch fleet, consisting of five sail of the line, and several frigates, escaped, by favour of the night.—This was one of the best-contested actions of the war. The loss of the English, in killed and wounded, was seven hundred and fifty-one; and that of the Dutch was much more considerable. This victory completely defeated the grand project of the French Directory, and convinced them that it was much more easy to talk of wresting from the British the Sceptre of the Ocean, than to reduce their threats to practice.

By land, however, they were more successful; and victory still followed the banners of the Republic. As their grand effort was to be made in Italy, whence it was intended to penetrate into the hereditary states of Austria, their army, in that quarter, had been reinforced to 90,000 men; of whom Buonaparté had the command in chief, with Massena and Joubert under him. To oppose this force, the Archduke Charles, who was now placed at the head of the Austrians, had only the relics of the defeated troops of the preceding year, with a small body of new undisciplined troops; the whole composing an active force of not more than 38,000 men. Fresh levies, indeed, were raising in Croatia and Hungary; but it would be a considerable time before they could join the army. The utmost that the Archduke could expect to do, with a force so greatly inferior, was to defend the entrance into his brother's dominions, and to afford time, by judicious operations, for the destined reinforcements to join him. The Austrian troops occupied the duchy of Trent, the Tyrol, the country of Feltre, and the Trevisano; and the Archduke's head-quarters were at Udina. The French line was at a short distance from the Austrian, and nearly in front of it.

On the 10th of March, Buonaparté put his army in motion, after he had addressed to them a proclamation, replete with the most infamous falsehoods respecting his exploits in the last campaign; with the most cowardly abuse of Austria and England; and threatening to produce a

revolution in Hungary. The French pressed forward, and the Austrians retreated till the 13th of March, when General Lusignan, with only 2000 men, adopted the brave resolution to make a stand, behind the town of Belluna, against 10,000 French, under Massena, in order to gain time. For thirteen hours did he brave the unequal contest; and maintained his post during the whole day. At last, however, being surrounded, the greater part of his gallant corps having been destroyed, and the whole of his ammunition expended, he made one desperate attempt to force his way with the bayonet, through the enemy's ranks, and, having failed in this, was compelled to surrender, with the small remnant of his troops.

Buonaparté now advanced his right wing, and passed the Tagliamento on the 16th, after a vigorous but ineffectual resistance on the part of the Archduke, against a force so greatly superior to his own. This Prince contrived to fall back gradually, avoiding an engagement, which could not fail to be disastrous, and might be ruinous. By retreating, too, he augmented his own strength; while the enemy, by advancing, diminished his, from the necessity of leaving detachments in his rear, to secure his convoys, and open a communication with his magazines. He evacuated, on the eighteenth, the extensive fortress of Palma Nuova, which was in a bad state of defence, and the French took possession of it the same day. On the nineteenth, they moved forward to the Izonzo, and surrounded the town of Gradiska, which they made some vain attempts to carry by storm. Bernadotte summoned the Austrian commander to surrender, in the true style of French gasconade, and Republican brutality. He told him, that a longer resistance would be a crime, which he should principally revenge on his person, and, *to justify himself in the eyes of posterity*, he *must* summon him to surrender in ten minutes, and, in case of refusal, he should put the garrison to the sword. The Austrian officer did not wait for another attack, but, with more prudence than courage, surrendered his garrison prisoners of war. The French then pushed on to the frontiers of Carinthia, and the Austrians fell back to Vippach.

At this time, Buonaparté put his left wing in motion, in order to dis-

lodge the Austrians from the strong positions of the Tyrol.—Pressed by superior forces, the latter retired from post to post; they were attacked at Kerpen, on the twenty-fourth of March, and, after a most obstinate action, retreated, and took a position in the vicinity of Sterzingen, in the last, but strongest, part of the mountains of the Tyrol, on the side of Italy. In this last affair, Buonaparté assured the Directory, that General Dumas, *after having killed, with his own hands, several of the enemy's cavalry, like another Cocles, had alone stopped, for several minutes, upon a bridge, a squadron of cavalry, and had given time to his troops to come to his assistance.**

Being now in possession of three-fourths of the Tyrol, and having no fear of further resistance, Buonaparté hastened to the Izonzo, and made preparations for turning the right flank of the Austrian army. The Archduke, aware of his design, adopted the bold resolution of counteracting it, by a sudden and vigorous attack upon the left wing of the French. He collected his troops for this purpose, and set off on the twenty-first for Tarvis, where he had ordered the different columns to meet, and where he expected to be joined by some troops from the Rhine. He had the mortification, however, to learn, on the road, that the defile of Pontaffal had been forced by the enemy, who had already reached the vicinity of Tarvis; and so gained the command of a road, by which two of the Austrian columns, with his artillery, and baggage, were to advance. In this critical situation the Archduke determined to attack the French at Tarvis, and to endeavour, by that means, to re-open this important communication. He, accordingly sent orders to Generals Gontreuil and Bayalich, who commanded the two columns in question, to press forward with all possible expedition. The first of these officers instantly obeyed the order, and drove the French from the village of Safnitz, and thus gave time for the artillery to arrive at Tarvis. On the twenty-third, Massena, who had marched to the assistance of his vanguard, attacked General Gontreuil with more than 10,000 men. Though the Austrian General had only 3,000 to oppose him, he resolved to defend a post of so much importance as that which he now occupied,

* The History of the Campaign in Italy and Germany, p. 28.

to the last extremity. The Archduke arrived during the action, and, mounting on a dragoon's horse, rushed into the thickest of the fight, and so animated his men by his example, that they fought with the utmost desperation, and resisted, for several hours, every attempt to dislodge them. The French, however, having received reinforcements in the afternoon, and the other column of the Austrians, under Bayalich, not being arrived, this gallant little corps was ultimately compelled to abandon the village of Safnitz, and to retire from the field of battle, in which they had so nobly distinguished themselves.

The greater part of Buonaparté's army was now stationed in Carniola and Carynthia, and one division had taken possession of Clagenfurth. But he was aware that the further he advanced the greater would be his danger. He had found that his successes, far from striking the subjects of the Emperor with panic and dismay, had only served to rouse their courage, and to invigorate their efforts. The brave inhabitants of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, had rushed to arms; a large body of troops had been formed with great expedition; the spirit of the nation manifested itself in every quarter; and means of resistance were so provided and multiplied, that the Corsican began to fear that all the fruits of his past victories would be torn from him. Under these impressions, he sent a letter to the Archduke, on the last day of March, in which, after great professions of humanity, and many lamentations over the lives which had been sacrificed during the war,—professions and lamentations which, in the mouth of a man who had committed more wanton massacres, and more cold-blooded murders, than any tyrant who had ever desolated the face of the earth, could not fail to be duly appreciated,—he asked, if there were no prospect of putting an end to it. The Archduke, in his answer, told him, in substance, that it was his province to fight, and not to negotiate; but he immediately transmitted his letter to Vienna. In a few days, however, the Archduke received full power from the Emperor to enter into a negotiation for peace with the French; and, on the seventh of April, a suspension of arms was agreed on, and signed.

During this time, the Austrian Generals, in the Tyrol, had been joined

by a large body of the hardy inhabitants of that mountainous country, had attacked the French, and had nearly expelled them both from the German and the Italian Tyrol, when news of the suspension of arms put a stop to further hostilities. The negotiations were carried on with so much rapidity, that the preliminary articles of peace were concluded at Leoben, on the eighteenth of April. But as the restitution of Mantua to the Emperor formed one of the articles, the Directory deemed them too favourable, and refused, for some time, to ratify them.

Before the news of the armistice had reached the armies on the Rhine, the campaign had opened in that quarter. The French there, as in Italy, were greatly superior in numbers to the Austrians; and Hoche, on the one hand, had passed the Rhine at Neuwied, and, in a few days, gained several advantages over General Werneck, who commanded the Austrians in that quarter, and advanced to the gates of Francfort.—On the other, Moreau had crossed the river a little below Strasburgh; had gained possession of the important fort of Kehl, which had lately cost the Austrians so many lives, without firing a shot; and had advanced to Ettenheim, and the neighbouring towns; when he received intelligence of the treaty of Leoben.

This treaty occasioned great divisions among the Directory, of which one of them, Carnot, has given a faithful account. He, and Le Tourneur, approved it, but the other three, whom he called the triumvirate, "were furious at it; Reveillere," (the mild chief of the Theophilanthropists,) "was like a tiger, Rewbell sighed deeply. Barras disapproved the treaty, but said, 'that, nevertheless, it must be executed;' though, the very next day, unable to contain his rage, he rose hastily, and addressing himself to me," says Carnot, "said, in a fury, 'Yet it is to you that we are indebted for the infamous treaty of Leoben." Buonaparté, however, having approved the treaty, the Directory thought proper to ratify it; but, having so done, they refused to carry it into execution, and to restore Mantua to the Austrians.

By this perfidious conduct, on the part of the majority of the Directory, the Continent of Europe was kept in suspense for several months, while

the most active preparations were making, on both sides, for the renewal of hostilities. Conferences were opened at Udina for the final arrangement of the definitive treaty; but the Directory obstinately refused to give up Mantua, and actually sent orders to renew the war, if the Emperor would not agree to surrender that important fortress to the new Cisalpine Republic.

During this interval of suspense, Buonaparté had been actively employed in completing the Revolution of Italy. To the new Cisalpine and Cispadane Republics, was now added the Ligurian Republic, erected on the ruins of the Ancient Republic of Genoa; while the Little Republic of Lucca, not sufficiently republican for the modern reformers of Europe, was regenerated after the true French model. The Jacobin Generals on the Rhine, too, had not been less active; and, with the connivance and encouragement of the Directory, they established a Cis-Rhenane Republic in Germany. In Switzerland, too, Buonaparté having kindly undertaken to *mediate* between the Grisons and their subjects of the Valteline, graciously took the latter country under his immediate protection, by annexing it to the Cisalpine Republic.

While these military politicians were employed in giving to the crude offspring of their savage minds "a local habitation and a name," while the sapient directors of the Great Nation were affording their sanction and encouragement to all their acts of violence and outrage, some few members of the legislative body had the sense to perceive, and the honesty to expose, the infamy of such proceedings. Dumolard, who had derived some wisdom from the events of the revolution, openly condemned, in the Council of Five Hundred, the revolutions of Italy, and the attacks on the independence of Venice and of Genoa, without provocation, and without authority from the legislative body. He compared them with the partition of Poland, and ascribed them to a vast system of destruction and *disorganization*, which he charged the Directory with pursuing.—"The first attempt," said he, "was on Venice; and finding that it did not incur your displeasure, a similar attempt, and equally successful, was made on Genoa.—A revolution had been there brought about by agents of the French government. Europe and posterity will reproach France

for such a deviation from the principles which she herself asserted in her own behalf."

The Directory, however, pressed by a strong party at home, and fearful of losing their authority, had determined to employ force for the destruction of their enemies; and as it was necessary, for that purpose, to draw a considerable body of troops to Paris, they judged it expedient to conclude a peace with the Emperor. Accordingly, on the seventeenth of October, the peace of Campo Formio, (to which place the negotiations had been transferred from Udina) was concluded, by which the Austrian Netherlands were ceded to the French Republic; which was also to retain possession of the islands in the Archipelago, of those in the Adriatic, which had been wrested from the Venetians, and all the possessions of Venice in Albania. The Milanese and the Mantuan were ceded to the Cisalpine Republic.

On the other hand, the city of Venice, and all its territory, as far as the Adige, was secured to Austria, in absolute sovereignty.—An indemnity was to be granted to the Duke of Modena, whose dominions had been taken from him in the Brisgaw.—And a congress was to meet at Rastadt, for settling a pacification between France and the German Empire.—Besides these known conditions, there were seventeen secret articles, which, at a subsequent period, were published by the Directory, and never formally disavowed by the House of Austria. By these articles, the Emperor engaged to employ his *good offices*, to procure, from the different states of the empire, their consent to the extension of the French frontier to the Rhine, including the bridge-head of Manheim, and the fortress of Mentz; to secure the free navigation of that river, and of the Meuse, to the French.—On the other hand, the Bishoprick of Saltzburg, and the river Inn, with a considerable portion of adjacent territory, was to be obtained for the Emperor; and the contracting parties entered into several *contingent* stipulations, dependent on the projected dismemberment of the German Empire, and intended to prevent one of them from having a greater share of the spoil than the other.

By this peace, or rather by this precarious truce, the French govern-

ment, independently of the vast acquisition of territory and power, which it secured to them, gained a great point, by extorting from the Emperor a sanction of all their revolutionary proceedings, and by making him a partner in their unprincipled projects for robbing neutral states of their independence, and transferring the people, like a herd of cattle, from one master to another. The Emperor, too, disgraced himself by an acquiescence in these plans, and especially by assisting in the dismemberment of that Empire, of which he was the lawful head, and which he was, consequently, bound to defend. It might, indeed, be urged, that the different Princes of the Empire had first forsaken their chief, and, regardless of their duty, had violated those laws which they stood pledged to observe, and had afforded every possible assistance to the common enemy.—This, indeed, was but too true. Still their pusillanimous conduct, and their breach of faith, afforded the Emperor no legitimate justification for giving his support to the revolutionary system of France, by lending his aid to those plans of *disorganization*, which constituted the most essential part of it.

It has been already observed, that the majority of the French Directory were adverse to the peace, and only consented to it because they were engaged in the execution of a plan, at home, which more materially affected themselves. The new government had become not merely unpopular, but even despicable in the eyes of the people; so much so, indeed, that the crafty Sieyes refused a seat in the Directory, who, according to Carnot's account, who was himself a director, had great difficulty even in procuring *servants*. Indeed, when it is considered of what materials the Directory was composed, the indignation or contempt in which it was universally holden, will not appear extraordinary. Every one of its members had been decided Jacobins, and had voted for the death of the King; and most of them had been active participators in all the crimes of Robespierre, during the prevalence of his system of terror. The Theophilanthropic La Reveillere Lepaux, a man of obscure birth, of mean talents, and a weak mind, had left his botanical pursuits, in Anjou, to become a politician at Versailles. He was a member of the States-General, in 1789; and, though distinguished for his hatred of the aristocracy and the clergy, he made a speech, in May,

1791, in which truth triumphed over prejudice, and the record of which exhibits as glaring an instance of inconsistency, in principle and conduct, as is to be found in the monstrous annals of the Revolution.—"In a country so extensive as France," said he, "the bonds of government ought to be drawn more closely together than in Glaris or Appenzel, or else she would be abandoned to the horrors of Anarchy, whence she would be extricated only to fall under the domination of a few intriguing spirits.—Therefore, I, who am not very partial to courts, do not hesitate to assert, that, *on that day on which France shall cease to have a King, she will lose her liberty and her repose, and be delivered up to the dreadful despotism of faction.*"* And yet this was the very man who combined to destroy the King of France, and who became a member of those very factions, whose desperate machinations overthrew the Throne and the Altar, fulfilling his prediction, by the annihilation of civil freedom, and domestic repose; and by establishing a system of despotism, the most odious and intolerable to which any nation of the earth was ever known to submit. Carnot, his brother Director, whom he deceived and outwitted, represents him, in his memoirs, as one of the most immoral and hypocritical of human beings; with falsehood on his tongue, and corruption in his heart. And he cites an instance of his barbarity truly atrocious.—Doulcet's name being erased, by the Council of Five Hundred, from a list of proscription which the Directors had drawn up, La Reveillère was so enraged at the loss of his victim, that he seriously proposed to the other Directors to have him assassinated!

Soon after the appointment of the Directory, they coalesced, for a while, with the Terrorists, in order to crush their mutual enemies, the men of moderate principles; but the success of this plan was defeated by the still greater enmity which subsisted between those Terrorists who adhered to Robespierre to the last, and those who brought him to the scaffold. And, in the following Spring, of 1796, an event occurred which effected some change in the views and opinions of the Directory. In the month of May, that year, a conspiracy was disco-

* See his Speech, of May the 18th, 1791, in the Moniteur of the following day.

vered, the object of which was to murder the Directors, and all the members of the Administration, to overthrow the present system of government, and to restore the Constitution of 1793. This notable plan was devised by a low fanatic, of the name of Baboeuf, who had assumed the Roman appellation of *Gracchus*; and who was assisted by the noted Drouet, the postillion, who stopped the King at Varennes. Both these men were apprehended; Baboeuf having, on his trial, boldly avowed his crime, in which he gloried, suffered death; but the Jacobins contrived to effect the escape of Drouet from prison; and this wretch, who had the mind and manners of a post-boy, was afterwards employed by the Directory. After this discovery, the Directors adopted greater circumspection in their conduct, and moderation in their language; and no difference occurred between them and the Councils, till the new election, which took place in the Spring of 1797; when, notwithstanding all the arts of intrigue which were exerted by the Directory, and all the manœuvres of the Jacobins, nearly the whole of the new deputies were adverse to the present system,—most of them were men of anti-revolutionary principles, and among them were some royalists, and even more than one emigrant.

It was now the time for one of the Directors, too, to go out, by lot; but Letourneur, being one of the least decided characters among them, and supposed to be weaker than his associates, (though he had voted for the death of the King, pronounced a public eulogy on *Marat*, at the Jacobin Club, and had even undertaken the defence of *Carrier*, in the Convention;) it was resolved to bribe him, by a large sum of money, and the post of Ambassador, to let the lot fall upon him. He accordingly resigned the Directorial Office, and Barthelemi was chosen to succeed him.

From this time, there was a majority of the two Councils opposed to the Directory, and, during the Summer of 1797, a regular warfare was carried on between them, in messages and in speeches. The majority of the nation sided with the Councils, and, if their energy had been equal to the goodness of their cause, there can be little doubt that they would have succeeded in their efforts to give a better Constitution

to France, and peace to Europe. Their opponents, however, were better versed in the revolutionary tactics, more conversant with the maxims of the Robespierrian school, and less scrupulous about the means of accomplishing their end. The Directory, too, were masters of the army, and of the whole executive power of the state.

The enemies of the Directory, conscious of their majority, made no secret of their designs; but, with a degree of weakness not easily to be accounted for, considering that they must have had a perfect knowledge of the characters and dispositions of the men who were opposed to them, they lost their time in petty disputes, and in subjecting the Directory to trifling mortifications; whereas, if they had either waited quietly till the period of another election, when they might, without difficulty, have secured a majority in the Directory, or had struck some decisive blow before the Directors were thoroughly prepared for resistance, their triumph had been certain and complete.

Although the Directory had solemnly declared, that they could not, on any consideration, violate any one article of the Constitutional code, when called upon to give up a portion of the conquests which they had made, in order to restore peace to Europe; yet, when their object was to crush their personal enemies, they did not scruple to violate two very essential articles of the same code. By one article, the army were expressly prohibited from *deliberating* on any subject whatever.—Yet, on the present occasion, in consequence of applications from the Directory, who had connived at all their plunder and extortion, they loudly declared themselves in their favour. Buonaparté made all the divisions of the army of Italy present petitions, of a threatening nature, against the Councils. Moreau and Hoche did the same with their armies on the Rhine.—And the latter, who, from a stable boy, had become a General, as being a furious jacobin, was pitched upon by the Directory, to command a body of troops, which they had ordered to Paris to destroy their enemies in the councils. By another article of the Constitution, the approach of troops to within a certain distance from the place at which the Legislative Body held its sittings, was expressly forbidden.—But this, and every other article, were disregarded by the

Directory, when they had any favourite object to accomplish. Hoche, however, alarmed at the state in which he found the public mind, on his approach to the Capital, was induced to decline the commission;* and Augereau, who was originally a private soldier in the Neapolitan army, but now a favourite General with Buonaparté, was employed in his stead. Augereau had no sooner taken the command of the troops than he moved forward, and passed the limit prescribed by the Constitution. The impetuosity of this man had outstripped the wishes of the Directory, who were not yet prepared to inflict the meditated blow; and, had the councils acted with firmness and decision, and passed a decree of accusation against the triumvirate, they might still have succeeded. But they wasted that time, which should have been employed in action, in frivolous debates, and fruitless discussions; and, while they were engaged in the silly expedient of ascertaining, with precision, whether the troops had really passed the Constitutional limit, the hall in which they sate was suddenly surrounded, and most of the chiefs of the party, in opposition to the Directory, together with the new director, Barthelemi, were arrested without the smallest resistance or difficulty; and, being placed in carriages, resembling iron cages, previously prepared for the purpose, were sent to Rochefort, where a frigate waited to transport them to the pestilential deserts of Guiana. The remains of the two councils, who no longer constituted a legitimate body of representatives, and who were not competent to perform any one act of legislation, now assembled at the *Odeon*, and conferred on the Directory, by a formal decision, that absolute power which they had usurped, in breach of the constitution, which was specially trusted, by its concluding provision, to the safeguard of the Directory and the Legislative Councils. The immediate consequence of this event was the triumph of jacobinism, and the re-establishment of a revolutionary government.

* In some accounts it is stated, that Hoche committed certain acts of imprudence, (which, from the violence and brutality of his disposition, is not at all improbable,) which rendered it necessary for the Directory to disavow him. He died soon after his return to Germany; and the accounts differ as to the mode of his death, some imputing it to poison administered by order of the Directory, (See History of the Campaign of 1797, Vol. II. p. 213. *Note.*) and others to debauchery. (See Dictionaire Biographique, Tome III. p. 198.)

During these transactions in the interior of France, Mr. Pitt, and the British Cabinet, resolved to make one other effort to induce the French Government to open a negotiation with a real view to the conclusion of a peace. The only possible reason which could induce the Ministers to think that there existed, at this time, a greater probability of finding in the Directory a better disposition to conclude a fair and reasonable peace, than at the period when they made their last attempt, was the spirit which the majority of the two Councils had lately displayed. The preliminaries of peace, indeed, between the Emperor and the French, recently signed at Leoben, rendered it politic to become a party in the pending negotiations for a definitive treaty, as the allied powers could treat with more advantage jointly than separately. But it was very well known that the Directory would never depart from their settled system of concluding distinct and separate treaties. The preliminaries of Leoben, however, smoothed the way to a successful negotiation between England and France, as the Emperor had himself surrendered the Austrian Netherlands, which appeared to constitute the principal obstacle in the last negotiations; although it did not necessarily follow that England should acquiesce in the possession of a country by France, which would increase not only her general power, but her particular means of annoyance, as applicable to Great Britain, because the lawful possessor of that country had been compelled, by the force of arms, to surrender it.

Thus stimulated, and always most anxious for peace,* the British Ministers resolved to apply to the French Government on the subject. Accordingly, on the first of June, Lord Grenville wrote to M. Delacroix, proposing to enter, without delay, upon the discussion of the views and pretensions of Great Britain and France, for the purpose of signing preliminaries of peace, which might be definitively arranged at a future congress. This letter was immediately answered by the French Minister, who expressed the eagerness of the Executive Directory (an eagerness

* A writer, in the Annual Register for 1798, with very little regard to truth, asserts, that the British Ministry "*assumed only an appearance* of being desirous to put an end to the war, to which the public had long testified an aversion." This evident desire was not a mere appearance, but an absolute reality; for never was man more sincerely desirous to attain any object than Mr. Pitt was to put an end to the war.

which they certainly never felt) to receive the pacific overtures of the British Court, and their desire that the negotiations for a definitive treaty should be entered upon at once. On the 11th of June, passports were forwarded for the British Plenipotentiary, but drawn up in a very unusual manner, declaring them to be passports for a person "*furnished with the full powers of his Britannic Majesty, for the purpose of negotiating, concluding, and signing a definitive and separate treaty of peace with the French Republic.*" This paltry artifice did not escape Lord Grenville, who, in his reply, objected to that part of the passports, as not answering exactly to the powers and mission of the King's Plenipotentiary, whose full powers would include every case, and, without prescribing to him any particular mode of negotiation, would give him the most unlimited authority to conclude any articles, or treaties, whether preliminary or definitive, which might best conduce to the speedy re-establishment of peace, the Minister being equally ready and authorized to begin the negotiation upon either footing. As to the question of a separate treaty, it was his Majesty's determination to provide for what was due to the Queen of Portugal, being willing, at the same time, to enter into the necessary explanations with respect to the interests of Spain and Holland. The Executive Directory expressed their perfect coincidence with the sentiments of the British Monarch, and consented to send new passports, although they declared that another person would have been more likely to conclude a peace than Lord Malmesbury. After an interchange of two or three preliminary notes, Lord Malmesbury repaired to Lisle, and, on the 6th of July, had his first conference with the French Plenipotentiaries, Letourneur, (lately one of the Directory) Preville le Pelley, and Maret, whose secretary was General Colchen.

In order to obviate every difficulty, to avoid every unnecessary delay, and to prevent those imputations of insincerity, which enmity on the one hand, and faction on the other, had so lavishly, and so unjustly, cast upon the Ministers, after their former vain attempt to put an end to the war, Lord Malmesbury, the very day after the exchange of full powers with the French Plenipotentiaries, delivered in a project, containing the specific terms on which England was willing to make peace with France; and never, surely, at the outset of a negotiation, were

terms so reasonable, so equitable, and so favourable, proposed by one contracting party to another, whose relative situation was similar to that of the present belligerent powers. In fact, the language held was, substantially, this,—*Great Britain will restore all her conquests, without exception, which have been made from France; and of the conquests which France has made, Great Britain requires the restitution of none!* The British Cabinet offered, at the same time, to make peace with Spain and Holland, (the allies of France) on condition of retaining the Island of Trinidad, the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomalè, in the Island of Ceylon, and of receiving the town and fort of Cochin in exchange for Negapatnam. In respect of France herself, there was nothing to which it was possible for the Directory, had they been really desirous of peace, to object in these conditions, which left them in possession of their favourite boundaries, and, indeed, the absolute masters of the European Continent from the Gulph of Naples to the Texel. And the terms proposed to their allies were as reasonable as, in the relative circumstances of the respective powers, could possibly be expected.

Eight days elapsed before any answer was given to these proposals; and then the Directory insisted, as *an indispensable preliminary*, that Great Britain should restore every conquest which she had made on France *and* on her allies. On this insolent, and unwarrantable proposal, which proved that the Directory never meant to conclude a peace, Lord Malmesbury truly remarked,* that it would not only most certainly prevent the treaty from beginning, but would leave no room for treating at all, since it deprived the King of Great Britain of every means of negotiation;—it went, indeed, to establish a principle of all cession and no compensation. The observations which his Lordship made on the subject were such as could not be answered; and, therefore, the French Ministers exerted their ingenuity to convince Lord Malmesbury, that it was not intended to prevent negotiation, and that the obvious meaning of the proposal was not that which he ought to put upon it. The Directory themselves, indeed, appeared to coincide with their plenipotentiaries in this explanation, and to admit the reasonableness of the

* See State Papers relating to this negotiation, No. 20.

objections started by the British Plenipotentiary, as they remained for a considerable time unresolved, and affected to consult with the governments of Spain and Holland, with a view to obtain their consent to some relaxation of the conditions proposed. Indeed, the observations of the British Cabinet, on this strange proposal, conveyed by Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, and, by the latter, repeated to the French Plenipotentiaries, were unanswerable. It was remarked, that France, treating in conjunction with her allies, and in their name, could not, with any pretence of justice and fairness, oppose her treaties with them as an obstacle in the way of any reasonable proposal of peace in which they were to be included. In a separate negotiation, to which they were not parties, such a plea might, perhaps, have been urged; but, in that case, France would have been bound to offer, from her own means, that compensation which she did not think herself at liberty to engage to obtain from her allies.—And these reasons were urged with a better grace by the British Cabinet, as they were precisely the same which had influenced their own conduct in the last negotiations, when Great Britain was bound by engagements to Austria similar to those by which France now pretended to be bound to her allies. But it never could be allowed, that France, Spain, and Holland, negotiating jointly for a peace with Great Britain, could set up, as a bar to the just demands of the latter, the treaties between themselves, from which they were, at once, able to release each other whenever they should think fit.

Some objections, of a trifling nature, were made, by the French Plenipotentiaries, to two or three of the articles in Lord Malmesbury's project. The first to which they objected was, the title of King of France, used by the King of England, which was no longer admissible, according to them, after Monarchy was destroyed in that country, although it was well known that it was a mere title of honour, unconnected with pretensions of any kind; and was certainly less galling to French Republicans than it could have been to a French Monarch. They next objected to a renewal of all former treaties, although it was an article usually inserted in all treaties, and was peculiarly well calculated to obviate misapprehensions, and to prevent future disputes; and although, by the insertion of it in the present project, the French

Government was placed, by Great Britain, in precisely the same situation in which the French Monarchy had always stood, which amounted to the fullest acknowledgement of their sovereignty, and the completest recognition of the Republic that could be desired on the one hand, or given on the other. But these were subordinate points, on which the success of the negotiation did not at all depend. In the beginning of the correspondence between the respective plenipotentiaries, Lord Malmesbury had been assured that, if the Directory should reject the terms which he might propose, they would, themselves, present a counter-project, containing their own conditions; and this promise they were now called upon to fulfil.

The French plenipotentiaries admitted the justice of the demand, and declared that they would immediately apply to the Directory for that purpose. But though this communication took place on the 25th of July, the remainder of that, and the whole of the following, month, were suffered to pass away, without presenting this counter-project, without any modification of the late demand of the Directory, and without advancing a single step in the negotiation. And, although Lord Malmesbury frequently remonstrated against this dilatory conduct, so strongly indicative of a determination to conclude no treaty, the Directory had the profligate assurance, in a message to the Council of Five Hundred, to impute the delay to the British Cabinet. Lord Malmesbury, however, extorted from their Minister an avowal of the injustice of the charge, and from the Directory themselves, a declaration, as false as the imputation itself, that they meant no reflection on the English government.

But there was an efficient cause for all this shuffling and equivocation, on the part of the Directory, which was obvious to every one who attended to the passing events at Paris.—The majority of the Directory, and the Jacobin party, in the two councils, were decidedly averse to peace, and intent on produciug the destruction of England, by revolutionary means; *Delenda est Carthago,* was their favourite maxim,* which

* See Camille Jordan's address to his constituents.

Brissot had first applied to this country; and which every successive leader had adopted. On the other hand, the majority of the Councils, and two of the Directors, Carnot and Barthelemi, were really desirous of peace. This had been the subject of frequent disputes between the rival parties; and so long as the majority in the Councils were adverse to the majority in the Directory, the latter were afraid of declaring their sentiments openly, and of bringing the negotiations at Lisle to an abrupt termination. Resolved, however, on the final accomplishment of their purpose, they contrived to prolong the conferences till they had succeeded in their meditated destruction of their political enemies. But no sooner was the revolution of the fourth of September achieved, than they threw off the mask, and assumed a different tone, and pursued a different conduct. They recalled their plenipotentiaries from Lisle, and sent two others in their stead, Treilhard and Bonnier, whose principles were more in unison with their own, and who were secretly instructed to break off the negotiation as soon as possible. At the first interview which these men had with Lord Malmesbury, they repeated, in peremptory terms, the very same demand, which had been positively rejected two months before;—that Great Britain should restore all the possessions which she had taken from France and her allies, on the old principle, that the Directory could not agree to any terms that were inconsistent with the laws of the Republic, or incompatible with her treaties;—and this was again required as an indispensable preliminary to negotiation.—The Directory could not possibly have taken a more efficient means for breaking off the negotiation; nor could they have had recourse to this for any other purpose, or with any other view. They knew that it had been positively rejected before; and that the British Cabinet had expressed their firm determination never to degrade their country by acceding to a proposal so arrogant, unreasonable, and unjust; and therefore they must have been certain that it would produce an immediate rupture of the negotiation.

Treilhard, indeed, who had been bred a lawyer, when Lord Malmesbury stated these circumstances to him, endeavoured, with great ingenuity, to prove, that this very proposal only manifested the earnest desire of the Directory to remove every obstacle to the conclusion of a peace. In

other words, that the Directory were anxious to make peace, if allowed to dictate their own terms, and to disgrace their enemy in the eyes of Europe, by extorting his consent to conditions to which he had before declared he never would accede. In answer to the remark of the British plenipotentiary, that, by the adoption of this proposal, no subject for negotiation would be left, he maintained, that this would not be the case, that many articles would still remain to be proposed, and many points for important discussion.—As, however, he declared that the orders of the Directory were peremptory and precise, and that they would never depart from this demand, Lord Malmesbury formally renewed his refusal to comply with it; and that very day he received an order to leave Lisle in four and twenty hours.*

* The just observations which my deceased friend, Mallet du Pan, the most acute and intelligent political writer of the age in which he lived, applied to the abrupt dismission of Lord Malmesbury from Paris, will equally apply to his *as* abrupt dismission from Lisle.

"Whatever were the views of the British government, the Directory did not take the trouble of throwing the blame upon them; they took upon themselves the responsibility attached to the rupture, with their usual arrogance and audacity. Since public negotiations, regular forms, and the obligation of mutual respect, had been established in Europe, there had never before been an instance of the Ambassador of a great power, equally entitled to attention by his personal qualities, and his public character; and coming to propose peace from a nation which had not lost a single inch of territory, being treated with such brutal insolence; and, after having experienced every kind of affront, being driven away, like a spy, at twenty-four hours notice.

"This is incontestibly a new right of nations! The courtier, who is most partial to the French revolution, cannot deny, that there now exists a power, which, in its negotiations, has introduced the mode which the Senate of Rome pursued with the little Kings of Asia, and which the Eastern Monarchs still observe with their tributary states. It is not England alone that sustains this affront, it is all Europe; it is an insult levelled at all crowned heads, and at all the conventions of custom and decorum, which have been eternally respected. The state which violates these with outrage, declares itself the sole arbiter of the respect and attention which are due to the sovereignty of other powers, and proclaims its disavowal of their titles and their rights; it avers, that all the proceedings hitherto observed must fall before its own supremacy; and that, henceforth, it will regulate its negotiations by the caprice of its directors, and by the rule generally observed by a sovereign in a compromise with rebels.

Letter to a Minister of State, on the connection between the political system of the French Republic, and the system of its Revolution.—Translated from the French of Mallet du Pan. P. 9, 10.

The further subjects of discussion mentioned by Treilhard prepared Great Britain for demands still more humiliating, had she been weak and base enough to comply with the first, which the insolence and presumption of the Regicidal Directory had led them to propose. The restitution of fourteen ships of the line, and twenty-four frigates, being the number which had been taken or destroyed, at the evacuation of Toulon, had been urged in an early part of the negotiation.—But there was reason to believe, that one of the points, reserved for further discussion, was of much greater importance, and related to nothing less than the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, and its erection into an independent republic, under the special protection of France. It is known, that a regular correspondence had been long maintained between the members of the Irish union and the French government; that the former had sent Mac Nevin to Paris, as their regular Ambassador, to claim their assistance, and to settle with them the plan of that invasion, which was afterwards unsuccessfully attempted by Hoche; and that he had frequent conferences with the Directory, during the whole time of Lord Malmesbury's first embassy. At *Lisle*, also, agents from the disaffected in Ireland had interviews with the French plenipotentiaries.* And there is not a doubt of the existence of a regular treaty between the Directory and the Irish Rebels, by which the former undertook to supply the latter with the necessary succours for enabling them to resist the lawful government of the country, and to establish them as a separate and

* In a paper published in Ireland, and notoriously supported by, and speaking the sentiments of, the United Irishmen, *The Union Star, No.* 8, appeared the following address to the people of Ireland:

"Irishmen!—Your country is *represented* by brethren of ability and virtue—*They plead your cause at Lisle, they negotiate for an independent Irish republic*, in the teeth of that diplomatic spy—Malmesbury. *They are countenanced and encouraged by the French commissioners*; and we have some hopes, that Ireland will be seen in the political map of Europe, when her cruel step-sister is consigned to the insignificance her crimes justly merit. Should some unfortunate event put off your delivery, by England purchasing an immediate peace, you should not despond.—*Peace will be only temporary!*—it may be productive of some political comforts, as we may then openly praise and study the glorious truths France is capable of producing. Communication with that country will be renewed, and liberty will gain new strength, and knowledge be more universal; consequently despotism must die; and Irishmen will go to the funeral!"

independent state. If, therefore, the British Cabinet had once admitted the principle, that the treaties which France had concluded should govern the terms of peace between her and Great Britain, it is evident the French government would have brought forward their treaty with the Irish, as one on which they were bound to insist, and to which, after her first admission, it would have been contended, Great Britain could not, consistently, refuse her assent.

The papers, relating to this negotiation, were laid before Parliament, which met early in November; were taken into consideration by the House of Lords on the seventh, and by the House of Commons on the tenth, of that month. In the Upper House, the address moved by Lord Grenville, passed without a dissentient voice; and, in order to give it greater weight and effect, it was proposed to render it the joint address of both Houses. Sir John Sinclair moved an amendment to it, in the Commons, which was strongly resisted by Mr. Pitt, and met, indeed, so little encouragement, that he was induced to withdraw it, and the address passed unanimously. Mr. Pitt entered into a clear investigation of the conduct of the French, during the negotiation, and contrasted it with that of the English. On one side all had been candour, liberality, and openness;—on the other, all fraud, duplicity, and injustice.—And, adverting to the preliminary condition prescribed by the Directory, he asked, whether he need argue the inadmissibility of such a demand?—Need he address himself to any set of men to prove its disgraceful nature, its arrogant pretension, or the infamy of acceding to it?—Could there be any man in this country to whom the argument would be necessary? Such a preliminary could not be admitted by any one who was not prepared to adore, in prostrate baseness, the idol of French power, who was not ready to prostitute the dignity, and the honour, of his country at the feet of France, to submit to the burden of accumulating infamy, and of still more degrading homage, of demands still more ignominious, to cancel at once all the honours of the British name, and to overthrow the foundations of British greatness.*

* Woodfall's Reports, Nov. 10, 1797, p. 118.

He marked the object and designs of the enemy, in a strain of animated, eloquence, which rivetted the attention of the House, and truly observed that it was not our commerce, nor yet our territories, which would satisfy the implacable vengeance of the French government. No! it was their object to destroy the essence of our liberty, the foundation of our independence, the citadel of our happiness—our constitution! That was the avowed object of their hostility. They had recently declared, that the French and English Government could not subsist together; that one of them must be destroyed. Should they come amongst us, they would bring with them their invading army, the great pestilence to man, the genius of French liberty, which contained in itself every curse to society, and would produce the total subversion of our constitution, with which it formed a fatal and a malignant contrast. In the place of that beautiful fabric would be a hideous monster, that nothing could satisfy but the annihilation of British freedom, and of those glorious principles which had rendered us the most conspicuous, and the most happy, people in Europe. If, therefore, we valued property,—if we valued liberty,—if we valued law,—if we valued national power,—if we had valued any thing that either had contributed, or could contribute, to our happiness, or even to our safety,—we should resist, with indignation, the demands of our enemy. It affected us all from the highest to the lowest. There was not one man, let his enjoyments be ever so great, or his property ever so considerable, who should not sacrifice any portion of it to oppose the violence of the enemy, nor one whose stock was so small, that he should not be ready to sacrifice his life in the same cause. We owed it as a debt to posterity, as well as to ourselves, to preserve our character in the page of history. We owed it as a gratitude to Providence, whose goodness had placed us so high in the scale of nations, and had caused us to be the admiration of Europe, with most of the governments of which our own formed a happy contrast.

In the course of the debate, Lord Temple expressed his concern that the negotiation had been begun, and his joy at its abrupt termination; in which sentiments Doctor Lawrence declared his perfect coincidence. Hence it appeared that Lord Fitzwilliam was not singular in his opinions,

on the inexpediency and danger of negotiating with the present government of France, so long as they continued to act on the principles of the original regicides; indeed, those opinions were entertained by many of the personal friends, and admirers, of Mr. Burke.

In their joint address, the two Houses of Parliament declared, that, after taking into their most serious consideratian the papers laid before them, they had recognized, in every stage of the negotiation, his Majesty's invariable and unremitted solicitude for their prosperity and welfare; while, on the other hand, they had seen the most abundant proofs of the continuance of that spirit of inveterate animosity, and desperate ambition, on the part of the enemy, in which the present contest first originated. His Majesty's conduct, characterized by an unexampled moderation, openness, and consistency, had left to the enemy no means of evasion, no subterfuge of disguise or artifice. It could no longer be doubted that their conduct was actuated by a fixed determination of excluding all means of peace, and of pursuing, at all hazards, their hostile designs against the happiness, and safety, of these kingdoms. Even the vain pretence of pacific dispositions was now abandoned, and the real purpose of all their councils, and all their measures, was, at length, openly and publicly avowed. It was to our laws, and government, that they had declared their irreconcileable hatred. No sacrifice would content them but that of our liberty; no concession but that of our envied and happy constitution.

Under such circumstances, the Lords and Commons felt the duty which they owed to God and to their country. Animated by the same sentiments which his Majesty had been pleased to declare to his people and to the world; attached to his Majesty by principle, duty, and gratitude, and sensible that it was only from firmness, and courage, that they could look either for present safety or for permanent peace, they were determined to defend, with unshaken resolution, his Majesty's Throne, the lives and properties of their fellow-subjects, the government and constitution of their country, and the honour and independence of the British empire. They knew that great exertions were necessary; they were prepared to make them; and, placing their firm reliance on

He marked the object and designs of the enemy, in a strain of animated, eloquence, which rivetted the attention of the House, and truly observed that it was not our commerce, nor yet our territories, which would satisfy the implacable vengeance of the French government. No! it was their object to destroy the essence of our liberty, the foundation of our independence, the citadel of our happiness—our constitution! That was the avowed object of their hostility. They had recently declared, that the French and English Government could not subsist together; that one of them must be destroyed. Should they come amongst us, they would bring with them their invading army, the great pestilence to man, the genius of French liberty, which contained in itself every curse to society, and would produce the total subversion of our constitution, with which it formed a fatal and a malignant contrast. In the place of that beautiful fabric would be a hideous monster, that nothing could satisfy but the annihilation of British freedom, and of those glorious principles which had rendered us the most conspicuous, and the most happy, people in Europe. If, therefore, we valued property,—if we valued liberty,—if we valued law,—if we valued national power,—if we had valued any thing that either had contributed, or could contribute, to our happiness, or even to our safety,—we should resist, with indignation, the demands of our enemy. It affected us all from the highest to the lowest. There was not one man, let his enjoyments be ever so great, or his property ever so considerable, who should not sacrifice any portion of it to oppose the violence of the enemy, nor one whose stock was so small, that he should not be ready to sacrifice his life in the same cause. We owed it as a debt to posterity, as well as to ourselves, to preserve our character in the page of history. We owed it as a gratitude to Providence, whose goodness had placed us so high in the scale of nations, and had caused us to be the admiration of Europe, with most of the governments of which our own formed a happy contrast.

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that Divine protection which had always, hitherto, been extended to them, they would support his Majesty to the utmost, and stand or fall with our religion, laws, and liberties.

These were patriotic sentiments; such as it became the representatives of a free and powerful nation to carry to the Throne of a Sovereign, who had no interest separate from that of his people; and whose first care, and greatest anxiety, were to promote their interests, to secure their happiness, and to guard their independence.

The cause of the unanimity which prevailed on this subject, in Parliament, was not the redemption of that pledge which the leaders of the Opposition had solemnly given to support the war, if equitable terms of peace could not be obtained from the enemy; but their absence from Parliament, and the spontaneous neglect of the duties of a representative. After the rejection of Mr. Grey's plan of Parliamentary Reform, Mr. Fox, and his followers, in both Houses, indignant at the inattention shewn to all their arguments, at the neglect displayed of all their admonitions, and at the refusal of Parliament, and the public, to adopt their principles and opinions, by the sacrifice of their own, determined to show their resentment, by deserting their posts, absenting themselves from Parliament, and leaving the majority to their fate. They seem to have entertained the strange notion, that they were sent to Parliament for their own gratification, or advancement; to oppose government, on all occasions, and to endeavour, by every means, to dispossess the Ministers of their situations, with a view to fill them themselves; and that, if they failed in all, or in any, of these objects, their vocation was at an end, and their labours might cease. If they had taken a just view of their situation, they would have perceived that their conduct was not to be justified upon the grounds which they alledged in its defence; or, indeed, on any grounds at all.—The systematic absence of a member has been truly considered as an unjustifiable abandonment of a trust reposed in him by his constituents, and as a base desertion of the duty which he owed to the public. But there is a still stronger ground of condemnation, since, by such desertion, members render the national representation incomplete. Had the Opposition acted with consistency, on this occasion, they would have accepted

the Chiltern Hundreds, have vacated their seats, and have afforded their constituents an opportunity for returning other representatives, with less ambition, and greater perseverance. Mr. Sheridan, indeed, contended, that his absence from Parliament was a matter with which neither the nation nor the House had any concern, a question to be settled between him and his conscience. This doctrine was alike false and unconstitutional; every representative being amenable, not indeed to the persons by whom he is elected, but to the nation at large, whom he represents, for his political conduct; and more especially for refusing to perform those duties which attach to his public station, and the due discharge of which is the implied condition of his election.

But, although neither the critical state of the country, during the existence of the mutiny, nor yet the increased danger with which it was threatened, by an enemy bent on its destruction, was sufficient to rouse the dormant patriotism of Mr. Fox; yet, no sooner was the Minister engaged in the most arduous and irksome of all his duties, in devising means for raising pecuniary supplies adequate to the exigencies of the times, than he summoned his little band of faithful followers, and, yielding to envy what he denied to principle, again entered the field of debate.

On the 24th of November, Mr. Pitt opened his scheme of finance for furnishing the supplies of the ensuing year, which, notwithstanding a reduction of expence, to no less an extent than £6,700,000, in the military and naval departments, amounted to twenty-five millions and a half. The great depression in the funds, at this period, suggested to the Minister the necessity of exercising great forbearance in having recourse to the funded system, which, though adopted as the most conducive to public good, on general principles, yet might be carried to an excess highly ruinous to public credit. To avert this evil, Mr. Pitt now proposed to raise seven millions of the supplies within the year, by a proportionate increase of the assessed taxes, so as not to exceed, in any instance, a tenth part of the income of the contributor, of the amount of which they were supposed to constitute a fair criterion. Of the twenty-five millions to be raised, the growing produce of the consolidated fund,

and the lottery, were estimated to supply £750,000; and the land and malt tax £2,800,000; making together three millions and a half. The Bank had agreed to advance three millions on Exchequer bills, to be repaid at short periods;—seven millions would be produced by the proposed augmentation of the assessed taxes;—and twelve millions would remain to be raised by the customary mode of a loan.

Upon the scale proposed for increasing the assessed taxes, if the duty amounted to more than one-tenth part of the annual income, the party was to be relieved by making oath of the fact. Two hundred a year was the lowest income, from which ten per cent. was to be taken; and the contribution descended, in a regular scale of abatement, to an income of sixty pounds, from which a one hundred and twentieth part, or ten shillings only, was to be deducted.

This plan excited great opposition, and no little discussion, both in Parliament and out of it. Mr. Tierney, who seemed anxious to supply the place of Mr. Fox, was, at first, its chief opponent; but, at length, on the 14th of December, when the report was brought up, Mr. Fox, with Mr. Sheridan, and the rest of his followers, attended the House. On that occasion they exerted themselves, to the utmost, to persuade the House to adopt those sentiments, and that line of conduct, which it had so constantly rejected, and its rejection of which was the avowed cause of their secession. But Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan refused to vote one shilling to the present Ministers, whose dismission they represented as necessary for the attainment of peace.* They admitted, indeed, that

* In the debate of Nov. 24, Mr. Tierney had alledged, as a valid reason for the dismission of Ministers, that they had not the confidence of the enemy, who would not, therefore, make peace with them; upon which Mr. Pitt observed,—"Sir, we cannot have the confidence of the enemy. The confidence of the enemy! No, Sir, that is impossible! We are not entering into the spirit of their rules; we are not disposed to promote their principles; we do not wish to imitate their system; we do not think it practical in England, however it may be made the subject of applause *by those who favour it in their hearts*, and, forthe purpose of opposing England's true interest, the occasional theme of vindictive declamation, while it is wished that their principles should be adopted; which principles have been admired, and occasionally extolled, since the commencement of the revolution, by those who have opposed us. If the only claim to the support of the honourable gentleman in the prosecution of the war is, to deserve the con-

they had once given a pledge to support the government, in case the French should refuse to accede to fair and honourable terms of peace; but that the pledge had been given when this country had great and powerful allies, and had been recalled, when Alderman Combe had moved for the dismission of Ministers. This pitiful and dishonest subterfuge was marked by as much duplicity as distinguished the conduct of the French Directory, whose cause they again pleaded with equal talent and energy. At the commencement of the war, in 1793, Mr. Sheridan avowed it to be his wish for this country to carry on the war alone, and to reject all alliances with the despots of Austria and Prussia; and yet, in 1797, he assigned the loss of these alliances as the motive of his refusal to support the war.

On the third reading of the bill, on the fourth of January, the Opposition again honoured the House with their attendance; and Mr. Fox again exerted his utmost powers to influence the minds of the people, by as violent a speech as ever was delivered within the walls of St. Stephen's Chapel. He maintained, that the constitution existed only in form and not in substance; that we had then, indeed, a form of Government, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons' House of Parliament; but not a Government consisting of the King, Lords, and the Commons, representatives of the people of Great Britain; it was a Government in which the power of the people was nothing.* By the theory of the constitution the House was free; but by its practice the members had no freedom to oppose the Crown in any thing of that

fidence of the enemy; if it is necessary to admire the French Revolution, which has been the root of all the evils of the present contest; if it is necessary to have asserted the justice of the enemy's cause; if the exertions of the war are to be entrusted to those who have, from its commencement, thwarted its prosecution, then, indeed, I am glad that we have not the vote of the honourable gentleman in our favour." *Woodfall's Reports, Nov.* 24, 1797, *p.* 228. Mr. Tierney's notions of the qualifications of a British Minister, appear to have been equally correct with his ideas of the duty of a British Representative. Two days before this debate, on November 22, at the close of his speech on the subject of the restrictions on the Bank, he said, "For my part, I can put my hand on my heart, and declare that, *as an honest man*, I never will vote a shilling to his Majesty's present Ministers."

* Woodfall's Reports, Jan. 14, 1798, p. 562.

nature; and the constitution was then shaken to its very foundation. * He made a most impotent attempt to defend his conduct in neglecting to discharge his duty in Parliament while he retained his seat.—He justified such an unconstitutional proceeding by the weak assertion, that although he could not be useful to the country at that time, he might at some other.† He adverted to the existing rebellion in Ireland, in speaking of which he observed precisely the same rule as he had followed in speaking of the French Revolution.—He expatiated upon the oppression of the *government*, and the *cruelty* of the regular troops, with the greatest vehemence and sensibility; but not a word did the atrocious tyranny and barbarity of the *rebels* extort from him!

Mr. Pitt entered into a full investigation of the many perverted facts, and erroneous principles, advanced by Mr. Fox.—Adverting to the question of *secession*, on which Mr. Fox had displayed great irritation, but little argument, Mr. Pitt observed that, as to the general principle, nothing could be more certain than that it was a violation of duty to desert a post which had been committed to his charge, and that in exact proportion to the danger of those for whom the charge was undertaken it increased. Now, it did so happen, that Mr. Fox could not, in his whole political career, have chosen a moment for cecession more encompassed with danger, than the one in which he actually did secede. The motive, therefore, was at best suspicious, and the act of his declining to attend, under such circumstances, led at least to inquiry, whether by absenting himself he sought opportunities to effect that, by inflaming the people without the walls of the House, which no exertion of his talents could achieve within. He retired just as the rancour of our enemy became most inveterate, and exclusively directed against this country; and when the manifestation of their malice called forth the spirit and zeal of all classes to support our national independence and honour. Mr. Fox had asserted his right to secede on his own motives of expediency, and, of course, those who surrounded him could not object to have their justification taken on the same principle; but Mr. Fox, it seemed, still retained his opinion of that expediency, and only

* Idem Ibid. p. 574. † Ibid. p. 572.

now appeared, at the particular injunction of his constituents, to defend their local interests. How came it, then, that he appeared so surrounded with friends, who, adopting his principle of secession, had not, in the desire of their constituents, the same motive for his particular exception? Could any thing shew, in a stronger light, the blind acquiescence of party-zeal, when, in defiance of every avowed principle of their public conduct, they now attended to add to the splendour of their leader's entry? The bill passed by one hundred and ninety-six votes against seventy-one.

While the bill was in the committee, it experienced many improvements, by the insertion of various additional clauses; particularly by one proposed by the Speaker for sanctioning the acceptance of voluntary contributions.—The principle of it was unquestionably good, as it professed to make every man contribute to the defence of the country, in proportion to his ability. The criterion, indeed, for ascertaining that ability, was far from sufficient; though, probably, it was as fair a criterion as could be safely adopted, at that time, on the introduction of a novel principle of taxation, by attempting to raise so large a portion of the supplies within the year. The bill, in passing through the Lords, experienced the same violent opposition from Lord Holland, as it had met with from his uncle in the Lower House. There was no epithet, expressive of censure and reprobation, which they did not both apply, as well to the principle on which it was founded, as to the mode adopted for carrying it into effect. Lord Holland did not hesitate to declare it worse in point of principle, than any of the plans of Robespierre;—and he objected to a tax upon income, because it must be, in most cases, a tax upon industry.* Yet, after a lapse of eight years, when the public danger was less, and the public burdens were greater, these very men did not scruple to give their support to a measure, similar, indeed, in principle, but considerably greater in extent, and infinitely more burdensome in operation. After much debate, however, the bill passed through its different stages, and finally received the Royal sanction on the twelfth of January.

* Woodfall's Reports, Jan. 9, p. 625.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Voluntary Contributions—Financial Arrangements—Plan for the redemption of the Land Tax proposed and explained by Mr. Pitt—Constitutional objections to it examined and confuted—Becomes a Law—Extraordinary motion of Mr. John Nicholl for applying all salaries *under* £2,000 a year to the use of the war—Mr. Pitt suggests the probability that the *motion* and *intention* of Mr. Nicholl are at variance—Mr. Nicholl insists that his motion is copied literally from a resolution which passed the House in the reign of William and Mary—That resolution, being read, proves to be directly opposite to the motion of Mr. Nicholl—Mr. Pitt shews that if the resolution had been as apposite as it was irrelevant, it could form no precedent, since it had been unanimously rejected by the House—Mr. Nicholl explains—Mr. Pitt combats the principle of the measure, and proves it to be oppressive and unjust—Motion withdrawn—Second Budget—Supplies—Ways and Means—New Loan—Measures of Defence—Threatened invasion of the country—Bill for the regulation of the Volunteer Force brought in to the House of Commons by Mr. Dundas—Passes without a division—Message from the Throne—Motion for an Address—Most ably seconded by Mr. Sheridan—His aspersions on the Ministry—Mr. Pitt's Speech—Address carried, in both Houses, unanimously—Bill for enabling his Majesty to detain suspected Traitors—Opposed by Mr. Sheridan—Supported by Mr. Pitt—Passed—New Alien Bill—Bill for manning the Navy by withdrawing protections—Mr. Tierney pronounces a panegyric on Mr. Arthur O'Connor—Vouches for his loyalty and attachment to the Constitution—Alien Bill passed—Debate on the Bill for withdrawing protections—Mr. Pitt's Speech—Mr. Tierney opposes the Bill—Observations on his sentiments—Mr. Pitt replies—Imputes Mr. Tierney's opposition to the Bill to a desire to obstruct the defence of the country—Mr. Tierney appeals to the Chair—Indecision of the Speaker censured—Mr. Pitt adheres to his first declaration—He receives a challenge from Mr. Tierney—They fight a duel on Wimbledon Common, during Divine Service, on the Sunday after the debate—This transaction reprobated—Misconduct of all the parties concerned, as well as of the House itself—Mr. Wilberforce intends to make it the subject of a specific motion, but foregoes his purpose from the want of support—Reflections on the event—Bill to enable the English Militia to serve in Ireland—Carried—The Press—Remarks on its importance—Its profligacy at this period—An English Newspaper in the pay of France—Libel in the Morning Chronicle—Condemned by the House of Lords—Motion for punishing the proprietor and printer—Lord Minto's Speech—The Leaders of the Opposition panegyrize the Morning Chronicle—Inaccuracy of their assertions proved by extracts from that Paper—Proprietor and printer sentenced to three months imprisonment in Newgate, and to pay a fine of £50 each—The Debates on this question strongly illustrative of that spirit of party, which Mr. Pitt

had to controul—The Newspaper Bill—Its object to preserve and secure the Liberty of the Press—Libel in *the Courier*—Newspapers rendered the Channel of Treasonable Communications to the Enemy—Mr. Tierney states the result of a conversation with the *Editor of the Courier*—Lord Temple calls upon Mr. Tierney to name him—Reflections on the subject—Extraordinary answer of Mr. Tierney—Comments on his Speech—Lord Temple's call enforced by the Solicitor-General—Its propriety demonstrated by Mr. Windham, who represents *the Courier* to be a Paper "full of Sedition and Treason."—Mr. Tierney asks whether he means to say, that "he was connected with a Traitor."—Answered—Mr. Pitt's Speech on the Bill—Comments on an assertion of Mr. Erskine's at the Whig Club—Dares him to support such an assertion in the House of Commons—Mr. Erskine does not accept the challenge—The Bill passes—Parliament prorogued.

[1798.] The clause which, on the proposal of Mr. Addington, had been introduced into the new bill for trebling the assessed taxes, or rather for levying a tax upon income, was productive of the happiest effects, not merely in supplying a large sum of money towards the exigencies of the state, but in affording the people an opportunity of displaying their zeal in support of their liberties and laws, which it was the avowed object of the enemy to subvert; and, in convincing that enemy, that every attempt to exhaust our finances would prove fruitless; and that, whatever his expectations of co-operation might be from the disaffected part of the community, the great body of the nation was sound, and resolved, should he dare to put them to the test, to conquer or perish, in defence of the Throne and the Altar. Voluntary contributions flowed in from all ranks and descriptions of persons, from the highest to the lowest; and, notwithstanding the unprincipled efforts of the disaffected, and the profligate attempts of the newspapers, in the interest of the Opposition, to discourage individuals from standing forth, in support of their country, on this awful emergency, their amount was estimated by the Minister, in his detail of Ways and Means for the expences of the year, at no less a sum than ONE MILLION AND A HALF! In this generous answer to the appeal made to them by the legislature, did the people of Great Britain display the sincerity of their patriotism, the ardour of their zeal, and the firmness of their resolution.

As a part of his financial system, Mr. Pitt brought forward, on the second of April, a plan for the redemption of the Land Tax. This was a measure which he had taken infinite pains to prepare, and from which

he cherished a sanguine hope that the most important advantages would result to the country. He stated the leading object of the plan to be an absorption of a great quantity of stock; the transfer of a considerable portion of the funded security into landed security; and, by the redemption of the existing Land Tax, to purchase a quantity of stock more than equivalent to the amount of the tax. The tax would be made applicable in the same manner as before, but the proportion of stock, which it would purchase, would be one-fifth larger, representing at once a considerable pecuniary gain to the public, and an advantage to the individual who should make the redemption. The chief recommendation of the plan however, was, that it would diminish the capital of stock, and remove that which pressed more severely upon the country, than any inconveniencies attendant on her present situation.

The actual amount of the existing Land Tax was computed at two millions per annum; and, if the whole of it were sold at twenty years' purchase, and the produce invested in a three per cent. stock, at fifty, it would yield eighty millions, affording an interest of two millions four hundred thousand pounds, and leaving a clear gain to the revenue of four hundred thousand pounds a year. At the same time the transaction would give a vast accession of strength to public credit, by taking eighty millions of stock out of the market.—The purchase, however, was to be varied, according to the fluctuations in the price of stock. When stocks were at fifty, the tax would be bought at twenty years' purchase; but for every variation of two and a half per cent. in the price of the stock, there was to be a corresponding variation of *one year's* purchase in the price of the tax. Thus, for instance, if the price of the three per cents. should be fifty-two and a half, twenty-one years produce would be required for the tax. This scale of variation would bring the tax up to thirty years purchase, when the price of the three per cents. should be seventy-five.

If the purchase were made, when the three per cents. were at fifty, the purchaser would have the advantage of receiving five per cent. interest for his money, on landed security. And the plan proposed, afforded every temptation to the owners of land, to sell a portion of it,

in order to purchase the tax, provided it were inconvenient to advance the money without it. If a person possessed an estate of a thousand a year, paying a land-tax of fifty pounds, he might sell fifty pounds of his rent for fourteen or fifteen hundred pounds, (from twenty-eight to thirty years purchase) and would thus clear from four to five hundred pounds.

Every facility was afforded to the proprietors of land to become purchasers of their own tax. They were, in the first instance, to have the right of pre-emption, as the land-tax, arising from any particular estate, was not to be offered for sale to third persons, until the expiration of a certain period, to be allowed to the proprietor of the land, to make his arrangements for the purchase. And even if third parties should become purchasers, it would not be irredeemable to the proprietor of the estate;—in that case, the liberty of redemption was only suspended to a given period, when, if the proprietor of the estate should be desirous to become the possessor of the land-tax arising out of it, he must replace, to the original purchaser, the same quantity of three per cent. stock which he paid as the price of his purchase.

A facility was also given to the *possessor* of land to become a purchaser. For which purpose the same power was allowed to the tenant for life, or in tail, to raise the money by burdening the property, as to the proprietor in fee, with a provision, however, that the money so raised should be strictly applied to the purchase of the tax. After Mr. Pitt had detailed the outlines of his plan to Parliament, he proceeded to consider some of the objections which had been already urged against it. It was obvious, that the measure proposed went to render the existing land tax perpetual, and universally redeemable, and, where not immediately redeemable, always subject to redemption, under certain regulations. The first objection, then, was made on constitutional grounds. It was urged that, to render a grant perpetual which was now annual, was to remove the constitutional checks of Parliament over the public expenditure, and to make that perpetual which was now only voted as an annual supply. Nothing, however, could be more easy than to place, under the annual controul of Parliament, funds, now permanent, equivalent to those which would, by the operation of the bill proposed,

be taken from under its controul. Certain branches of the consolidated fund might be made annual, even to a greater amount than two millions of land tax. This regulation would answer every purpose of constitutional controul; as Ministers, in such case, would not have it in their power to apply money without the consent of Parliament more than before. A particular clause was inserted in the bill to obviate this objection: by subjecting a still larger sum than the amount of the land tax to the annual disposal of Parliament.

The next objection to which Mr. Pitt directed his attention was this—that any measure which had for its object to perpetuate the existing land-tax, tended also to perpetuate the existing inequality of that tax, which, by many, was considered as an abuse of no trifling magnitude. He observed, that no attempt whatever had been made, since the revolution, to remove the inequality complained of, and therefore, he asked if, with the experience of a century before them, they had witnessed no such attempt, it was more likely to be made, were the vote to be annual, than if the grant were made perpetual? He did not mean to justify that inequality, on the contrary, he thought it a defect in the original plan, that no provision was made for a periodical revision of it. But he could not admit that, after property had been so long transferred under the existing inequality, it would be wise, just, or popular, to make a new valuation.

A third objection to the proposed measure was of a very different nature; for it was founded on its alledged tendency to produce an equalization of the land-tax; so that Mr. Pitt had to encounter opposite and contradictory objections. The question was, did the proposed measure give any new facility for the introduction of a general and equal land-tax? If it did give some new facility for employing the substantial resources of the country, and for deriving additional means of strength without distressing the people, he should be more disposed to claim it as a recommendation, than to consider it as a defect. But it possessed no such recommendation. It left the question of a more equal repartition of the land-tax precisely where it found it. Parliament, at present, had the undoubted right to rise more than four shillings in

the pound on land, and what greater authority would it acquire if the existing tax were redeemed? In the event of a total redemption it would be only necessary to provide that the amount of what had been redeemed should be deducted from any new impost; and such a provision would secure those who should take the benefit of redemption as much from any additional charge in future, on that account, as those who had not brought up their land-tax at all.

Having answered all the leading objections which had been opposed to this plan, he moved fifteen resolutions, which being adopted by the House, he brought in a bill on the nineteenth of April, for carrying them into legal effect. The subject underwent, in the various stages of the bill, that deep and deliberate discussion which its vast importance required; and the result of the investigation was the final sanction of the House, the bill being passed on the last day of May by a large majority. And on the twelfth of the following month it passed the House of Lords.

Pending the discussions on the financial arrangements of the year, and while the public mind was considerably irritated by the artifices employed to excite discontent at Mr. Pitt's new project for raising a large portion of the supplies within the year, a motion had been brought forward, by Mr. John Nicholl, in the House of Commons, on the eighth of December, (1797) the tendency of which was to increase and extend this impression. The House being in a committee of ways and means, Mr. Nicholl moved, "That it is the opinion of this committee, that the salaries, fees, and perquisites, of all the offices under the Crown, shall be applied to the use of the war, *except such as amount to £2000 per annum;* which are to be allowed to all officers whose salaries, fees, and perquisites, at present, exceed £2000 per annum. And also except that of the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Judges, *foreign* Ministers, and the commissioned officers of his Majesty's fleets and armies, or any persons who have a freehold interest in their respective offices."

Mr. Nicholl declared, that this motion was founded on a precedent in

the reign of William and Mary; with this difference, that then the act extended to all salaries above £500 a year; whereas he meant to limit the application of this act to incomes exceeding £2000. Unfortunately, however, the resolution was so worded as to convey a very opposite meaning, and, indeed, as to do the very reverse of that which Mr. Nicholl professed to have in view. For, had the House of Commons been as simple as the poor gentleman who introduced the question, and had adopted the resolution, it would have necessarily followed, that every office *under* £2000 a year must be abolished, and the salaries annexed to them be applied to the support of the war; or else the salaries must be raised to £2000 a year, by which means the national expence would be increased, and a necessity would arise for raising the sum equal to the amount of the former salaries, for *the use of the war.*

Mr. Pitt, however, with more generosity than can be generally expected from a political opponent, endeavoured to set Mr. Nicholl right; by suggesting to him the probability that the resolution, as it had been read by the clerk at the table, did not exactly mean what he seemed to have intended. As he (Mr. Pitt) had heard and understood it, and, he should rather suppose, as the House must also have understood it, it amounted simply to a proposal, that all salaries of office, but those of two thousand pounds a year value, (with the few exceptions stated) should be applied to the use of the war. Now, whether such a measure was compatible with Mr. Nicholl's general notions of political economy, or in unison with the tenour of the principles which he professed; whether this was the way of making a distinction in favour of poverty against wealth, it was for that gentleman himself to judge, and Mr. Pitt wished him to reflect upon it. But, for his own part, it appeared to him to be so utterly incongruous with his usual sentiments, and so unlike to the precedent on which he had founded it, that he was led to believe Mr. Nicholl had made a small mistake;—if so, he should be sorry to take advantage of it, and, in candour, wished him to re-consider it, and to favour the committee with an explanation, and to tell them what it was that he really meant.

Mr. Nicholl, however, insisted, that Mr. Pitt had mistaken his meaning, and that the resolution would, by no means, justify the inter-

pretation which he had put upon it. The resolution, therefore, was read again, when it evidently appearing, that it could bear no other interpretation, the House indulged itself with a hearty laugh, at the expence of the unfortunate mover; who, nevertheless, very gravely assured the committee that he had copied the resolution from that which passed in the time of William and Mary, word for word, with the exceptions and alterations which he had already stated. At his request, the resolution of the 3d of William and Mary was read; when Mr. Pitt observed, that a more extraordinary misapplication of precedents had never, he believed, occurred, within or without those walls. If it should be made to appear, that such a resolution, as that just read, had been actually agreed to, and ratified by the House, in the reign of King William, to agree to another, at that time, directly opposite to it as the one proposed by Mr. Nicholl was, would, indeed, be a very extraordinary way of shewing respect for, and adherence to, precedents; but there was a reason, and, in Mr. Pitt's opinion, no mean one, why the House ought not to be altogether so much prejudiced by the boasted precedent of King William, as to be diverted from the true principle of the question before it, into a concurrence with the measure now proposed. If Mr. Nicholl had taken the pains to follow up the history of that resolution a few pages further, a gentleman of his perspicuity would, no doubt, have been able to discover that reason. The resolution, it was true, had been agreed to, *nemine contradicente*, and, being moved hastily, was not worded with strict grammatical accuracy. It so happened, however, that what was thus hastily voted without a dissentient voice, when it came to be deliberately investigated, was rejected without a division, as impolitic and absurd. Mr. Pitt hoped, therefore, that gentleman would not out of prejudice, or from excess of fondness for precedent, adopt that measure which had never been adopted before, nor admit that which was held to be a good reason for rejecting it, in the time of King William, to be a good reason for adopting it now.

Mr. Nicholl having, at length, clearly explained his meaning to be, that no salary under £2,000 should be affected by the measure, Mr. Pitt entered into a serious argument, in order to expose, which he did most successfully, both its injustice and its folly. He shewed, that its opera-

tion would be most partial, since, while it took from the man of £2,200 a year, but the eleventh part of his salary, it would take from others a fourth, a third, a half, and even three-fourths of their income.—Whatever interpretation might insidiously be given to his observations, and implicated, though he was himself, in what he had to say on the subject, he did not hesitate to confess, and he said it with the candour, the confidence, and the firmness, which the occasion demanded, that the principle on which he chiefly rested his objection to the imposition of a tax upon office, was this,—that official income was, less than any other species of income, given for the private enjoyment, or personal gratification, of those who received it. To such as viewed them abstractedly, the situations of persons high in office appeared splendid, and envy and malignity ascribed to them an excess of private gratification which they never experienced, and of personal repose which they never enjoyed. The situation of a younger brother, whose public station conferred upon him the means, and imposed upon him the necessity, of maintaining an appearance equal to those of great hereditary rank and property, was looked up to with stupid malevolence, and viewed with an eye of envious exaggeration; but any one who considered the situation of such persons with impartial views, and attentively examined how much of their income was applied to personal gratification, would find that, in that respect, they were much below the general class of opulent society; that the far greater part of their expenditure was a tribute to the station which they filled, and to that appearance which it was necessary for them to maintain, in order to support an equality with those whom hereditary wealth had elevated to the highest ranks in the community. If, in a free country like this, the persons who held offices of the greatest trust and responsibility were to be selected as objects of taxation, it would, indeed, be extraordinary. But if it were so, and, in the evil spirit of such a principle, they were to be divested of their income, and with it exempted from the necessity of preserving the splendour of their appearance, what would they lose? Nothing intrinsically gratifying;—no, not one hour's personal enjoyment, out of the four and twenty, would be abridged by such a defalcation.*

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, December 8, 1797, p. 325—331.

Mr. Pitt, after pressing a variety of forcible observations on the House, on the absurdity of the measure, lastly considered the object it was intended to accomplish. It was proposed as a punishment on Ministers for past, or as a correction for future, errors. But was that, he asked, the principle of the boastful patriot—the reformer?—Was it the extent of his purity to avow, that he brought forward a measure, not on the broad bottom of its own merit, but with a view to give Ministers such an interest in the attainment of peace, as would induce them, without consideration of the means or the consequences, and without regard to their public duty, but merely for their own private purposes, to obtain a peace? If the war had been commenced in error, prosecuted with feebleness, and continued in corrupt obstinacy, he still conjured the House not to adopt a bad measure, in order to punish the authors of it, or to correct their future conduct, but to address the King to remove them from his councils, as legislators; not to make the private interest of Ministers a temptation to them to be guilty of a violation of their public faith, and of a breach of their duty, and, from sordid, corrupt, and undue motives, to sacrifice the dearest interests of their country.

Mr. Curwen and Mr. Tierney kindly stepped forward to relieve Mr. Nicholl from the confusion and embarrassment which his blunder had created; but as neither they, nor any other member, had the boldness to second his motion, he thought it most prudent to request leave to withdraw it, which the House indulgently granted.

In order to complete the financial arrangements of the year, Mr. Pitt brought forward a second budget on the twenty-fifth of April.—It appeared, from his statement, that, on account of the additional exertions which it had been deemed necessary to make for the defence of the kingdom, the expences of the year would exceed his former estimate by something more than three millions, making a total of £28,490,000. The specific amount of the excess on each particular article was:—Navy £910,000, making a total of £13,488,888;—Army £274,365, total £12,857,315;—Ordnance £12,541, total £1,303,580;—Miscellaneous £7,608, total £680,688;—For the reduction of the national debt £200,000. Total of the supplies £28,490,391. He next proceeded to state the variations

in the Ways and Means for supplying a sum adequate to this increased expence; and, in so doing, he particularly noticed the reduction which it had been found necessary to make in the article of the assessed taxes, to the amount of two millions and a half. This, however, he expected would, to a certain extent, be supplied by the voluntary contributions, which he justly considered as indicative of the approbation of their constituents of the conduct of the House, and of the conviction of the country of the necessity of exertions adequate to the exigency of the times. He then adverted to a novel regulation which would be productive of some increase of the revenue, besides being pregnant with other public benefits. This was the adoption of certain regulations respecting the convoy of our trade, and the consequent imposition of a certain tax upon exports and imports, in such a manner as not to risk the diminution of our commerce; a tax, too, which would be repaid by the decrease of the price of insurance; which would fall upon the consumer, and diminish the number of prizes which our extended commerce had afforded the enemy an opportunity of making. After some brief comments on other less material objects, Mr. Pitt thus recapitulated the Ways and Means for the year:—Produce of land and malt £2,750,000l; Assessed taxes £4,500,000;—Exports and Imports £1,500,000;—Lottery £200,000;—Advance on Exchequer Bills by the Bank £3,000,000;—The Loan £15,000,000.—Making a Total of £28,450,000.

Mr. Pitt then explained the terms of the loan, by which it appeared that the subscribers had advanced their money on terms highly advantageous to the public, as they did not receive, in stock, more than £99. 12s. for every hundred pounds; depending for their profit on the discount to be allowed for prompt payment, or the advantage arising from the saving of interest, if the money were paid by instalments. The sum to be provided for the payment of the interest upon seven millions of the loan, (the assessed taxes being intended to pay off the remainder) and upon a part of the unfunded navy debt, was £763,000.

The first object of increased taxation was Salt, upon which he proposed to levy an impost of five shillings per bushel, instead of half a crown, which it then paid. He calculated that this would fall but lightly on the

poorer classes, whose consumption, in general, did not exceed half a bushel yearly. His observations were highly judicious on the subject of making the poorer classes of society contribute, according to their ability, to the support of the war,—a subject which had never undergone a proper discussion; for the pitiful attempt *ad captandum vulgus* appears to have too frequently rendered the acquisition of popularity the *primary* object in the discharge of the high and arduous duties of a Minister of Finance. Hence had arisen, on the part of the lower orders of the people, a most mistaken and pernicious notion, alike destructive of every impulse of patriotism, and of every principle of duty, that the legislature had no right to call upon them to contribute to the defence of the state, and that they had no stake whatever in the country. Impressed, no doubt, with this idea, Mr. Pitt hoped that, if any man should tell them, that they were heavily taxed, he would tell them, likewise, that, if the nobleman, if the man of property, if, indeed, all the higher classes of the community, were interested in the present contest, they could not be more so than the lower orders were;—that there was no man in the social state more deeply interested in the contest than he who was doomed to subsist on the produce of his labour; that it was a contest which involved the happiness of the lower orders more immediately than that of any other; that the French Revolution had been followed up by a system of flattery and pride, to the passions of the lower class, while its effects had proved utterly destructive of their comfort; that of all descriptions of men in Europe, none had been more unhappily the dupes and victims of such a system, than the honest, the laborious, but too credulous, husbandman and mechanic; a system which had filled the greater part of Europe, indeed, with an equal portion of misery and disgrace. The other taxes proposed, were five per cent. upon all tea above half a crown per pound, which would produce £110,000; a tax upon armorial bearings, to yield £150,000; and these, added to the new duty upon salt, which was estimated at £503,000, would produce a total of £76,4000.

After some few observations from different members, more with a view to obtain explanations, than to start objections, the several resolutions were put and agreed to by the committee. The report was received on the following day; bills, pursuant to the different resolutions, were

brought into the House, and passed into laws, without any further discussion or observation, of moment, except on the question of exports and imports, on which some debate occurred, on the sixteenth of May, the result of which was that no British ship, registered, should be permitted to sail without a convoy, unless by special license from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and the regulation of the proposed imposts in the following proportions:—One-half per cent. on British manufactures exported to any part of Europe;—two per cent. on goods exported to the West Indies, or to America;—and three per cent, on goods imported. A further duty was imposed on tonnage varying according to circumstances.—The total amount of the tax on exports and imports was estimated at £1,170,000; and that on tonnage at £208,000; making together £1,378,000.

Such were the financial arrangements for the service of the year; and, next to these, the object which principally engaged the attention of Mr. Pitt, at this period, was the defence of the country against the threatened attacks of the enemy. As France had experienced from Great Britain the only effectual opposition which she had hitherto encountered, her rulers carefully investigated the means of doing her the most serious injury, and founded their hopes on the destruction of her public credit, on the strength of her internal factions, and on the success of a meditated invasion.—Their expectations of the ruin of her credit were derived, in a great measure, from the assertions and declarations of those who contended, that the substitution of one representative property for another was synonimous with bankruptcy. Unfounded apprehensions had, as has been seen, withdrawn from the Bank, much greater quantities of gold than usual. From these apprehensions, and the consequences which they had produced, the national repository, with all its store of assets, so infinitely above all demands upon it, was obliged to have recourse to another medium, but equally valuable as to every purpose of property. By those who either misapprehended the nature of money, the sign of commodities, or who wilfully misrepresented the case, the Bank was affirmed to be insolvent. This opinion, advanced by men of great talents, supported by all the minor satellites of disaffection, and disseminated in those publications, which were most certain to meet the eyes of domestic and

foreign enemies, had evidently great weight in nourishing the hopes of the French government; besides the misconceptions and mistatements arising from the Bank's change of representative signs. The object of the financial measures adopted during this Session was to support that credit which domestic and foreign enemies thus laboured to destroy.—That being attained, it next became necessary to provide efficient means for opposing an invasion from France.

Considered in itself, and in relation to the force and manifest energy of this country, the project was most extravagant and hopeless.—But the French were flushed with their success on the Continent, and were not disposed to admit the difference, obvious and even striking as it was, between the powers whom they had hitherto subdued, and that with which they had still to contend. Conscious, however, of their own inferiority on that great element which divides them from Britain, they supposed that they could elude her fleets, and then overpower her inhabitants by their armies. To the Cabinet of the Luxemburgh the loss of men appeared an object beneath their consideration. Unless they employed their troops on some foreign service, they knew they must be a burden to the country, and a terror to the government. Inured to licentiousness, and accustomed to plunder, their army must have some scene of depredation in view, to keep their expectations alive, and to check any disposition to mutiny or revolt. In the gasconading spirit of their country, the Directory professed to entertain no doubt of success, and even, for facilitating the accomplishment of their rash project, they opened a loan which the spoils of England were to repay.

The preparations, in the French ports, for carrying this plan into effect, made it an indispensable duty, on the part of the Minister, to adopt every possible precaution for rendering their attempts abortive. Accordingly, on the 27th of March, a plan of defence was submitted to the House of Commons by Mr. Dundas, who brought in a bill to regulate the employment of the volunteers, to prevent confusion in the field, to provide for the removal of cattle and other things, in the event of an invasion, and to indemnify persons who might suffer injury in their property by the operation of such measures. The House was

so struck with the necessity of this plan, that little debate, and no opposition, occurred in its progress through its various stages.—It formed only a part of the scheme of internal defence which the Ministers deemed it expedient in the actual situation of the country to adopt.

The traitorous machinations of the united Irishmen, and their correspondence with societies of a similar description in England, rendered the exertion of extraordinary vigilance and circumspection necessary; and sanctioned the adoption of measures, which, in ordinary times, no Minister would propose, and no Parliament support. But it constitutes the chief excellence of the British Constitution, that it contains within itself a principle of self-preservation, by facilitating the formation of laws to meet every possible exigency as it arises, and to repel every possible danger as it occurs, without any risk that the means pursued for the security of the venerable fabric will injure its foundations.

In pursuit of this grand object, a message from the Throne was presented to both Houses of Parliament, on the 20th of April, in which his Majesty informed the members that, from various advices which he had received, it appeared, that preparations for the embarkation of troops and warlike stores were carried on with considerable and increasing activity in the ports of France, Flanders, and Holland, with the avowed design of attempting the invasion of the British dominions, and that, in this design the enemy was encouraged by the communications and correspondence of traitorous and disaffected persons and societies in these kingdoms. His Majesty expressed his full reliance on the bravery of his fleets and armies, and on the zeal, public spirit, and unshaken courage, of his people, already manifested in the voluntary exertions of all ranks of his subjects for the general defence, more than ever necessary at a moment when they were called upon to defend all that was most dear to them. The two houses were informed, that the King had given directions to draw out the regiments of provisional cavalry, which had been raised in pursuance of an act of the preceding session; and that it was also his Majesty's intention to order the part not yet embodied, of the augmentation made to the militia, under another act of the same session, to be forthwith embodied and drawn out.

His Majesty farther declared, that he felt it incumbent on him to make the fullest use of the extensive means provided by Parliament for the national defence; but he felt it necessary, at the same time, under the circumstances stated, to recommend it to Parliament to consider, without delay, of such further measures as might enable him to defeat the wicked machinations of disaffected persons within these realms, and to guard against the designs of the enemy, either abroad or at home.

On the motion for an address to the King upon this message, Mr. Sheridan again stood forward, and, in a most eloquent speech, expressed his full conviction of the necessity of exerting every nerve to resist the common enemy. He made several wise and just observations, on the extent of the Royal Prerogative, which he truly described as amply sufficient, of itself, to justify the measure of calling forth the armed population of the country, in the event of a threatened invasion. While, however, he praised the spirit and alacrity displayed by the country, he could not so far forget his accustomed habits, as not to mingle the patriotic sentiments which his speech contained, with some attacks on the Ministers, to whom, as usual, he most unjustly ascribed, what he called, "*the wrongs and sufferings of the people.*" Nor, while he strongly deprecated the consequences of a French invasion, and deplored the alarming increase of French power, could he so far do violence to his principles, as to forbear an expression of his joy, "at the establishment of the French Republic, and at its *glorious efforts* to be free;" nor yet a repetition of the oft-confuted falsehood that France "had grown gigantic from the efforts which the allied powers exerted to *oppress its infant liberty.*" He did not attempt, however, to adduce any argument, much less any proof, in support of this extraordinary assertion, which tended to convert resistance of unprovoked aggression into oppression of infant liberty!

Mr. Pitt expressed his admiration of the energy, the vigour, the manliness, and the eloquence displayed in Mr. Sheridan's speech, with which he was so well satisfied that he forbore to comment on those parts of it to which he could not assent. He was too well pleased at the change which had taken place in that gentleman's sentiments, respecting the

conduct which this country ought to observe towards France, to investigate the grounds of that change. Adverting to an observation of Mr. Sheridan's, that much might be known to government which could not be known to him; Mr. Pitt remarked, that it was strictly true. Much was known to government which could not be known to him; but the country at large knew, that there existed a body of men, too considerable in number and activity for government to pass by unnoticed; men who were going on for the daring purpose of correspondence with the French, for establishing a system of republicanism in this country, under the auspicies of a foreign force. The existence of this conspiracy was confirmed by the conduct of our enemies; there were none of their proceedings, none of the speeches of their leaders, to animate the troops to the invasion of this country, no temptation to make their armies embark, no endeavour to prevail upon their scanty marine to try their feeble efforts, that was not followed up with the hope of success, by the co-operation of domestic traitors.—The address passed without a dissentient voice in both Houses, and that very night a bill was brought in and passed by the House of Lords, which was, in fact, a renewal of the former act, "to empower his Majesty to secure and detain such persons as he may suspect to be conspiring against his person and government." The bill was immediately brought to the Commons, and, after a desultory debate, in which Mr. Sheridan expressed his disbelief of the imputed conspiracy, on the ground that the French were not worthy of credit, and Mr. Pitt combated his opposition, as false in its principle, futile in its application, and inconsistent with the sentiments which Mr. Sheridan had just avowed; it was read three times, and passed, with only *five* dissentient voices, before the House separated;—and the next day it received the Royal assent.

In addition to these precautions, two other measures, forming a part of the same system of policy, were deemed necessary;—an alien bill, and a bill for more effectually manning the navy. While the House was in a committee on the first of these bills, Mr. Tierney, who was one of the five who had given their negative to the act for detaining suspicious persons, entered into an irregular justification of his vote upon that occasion, which it was certainly the duty of the Speaker to stop in the

outset. He attacked Mr. Windham, for having alluded to a treasonable conspiracy, at a time when a person was imprisoned on a charge of high treason. He accused him of more inhuman conduct than he had ever before witnessed. But it is remarkable, that, though there were several persons imprisoned under the same charge, Mr. Tierney's expression of resentment and concern appears to have related to only one object. And, seemingly impressed with the excellence of the old adage, "A friend in need, is a friend indeed;" he pronounced an eulogy on Mr. O'Connor, to whom he declared himself to be a friend; and added, that he should continue such until he should be convicted. He had lived long on terms of friendship with him, and he had never met with a more intelligent man; and, in all the conversations which he had ever had with him, *he found nothing in him that was contrary to the constitution of his country*;—nay, he declared, that the political professions of Mr. O'Connor *were perfectly consistent with his own sentiments*;—and that, if there were any man on earth whom he did not think a traitor, that man was Mr. Arthur O'Connor. * The bill, with little opposition, passed into a law.

More debate, however, arose on the other bill, for more effectually manning the navy, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt, on the twenty-fifth of May, and which gave birth to a remarkable incident in his life. He observed, that a similar bill had passed in the year 1779, and that its object was to suspend, for a limited time, the protections which various descriptions of persons enjoyed, to prevent them from being impressed into the service of the navy. If the House had felt no hesitation to adopt this measure at that time, in the second year of a war, when Spain and Holland were united, they would surely not hesitate to pronounce the renewal of it still more justifiable under the present alarming circumstances of the country. The House, he said, must also be sensible, that if the situation of the country were such as to induce it

* On the 21st of May, 1798, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and four others, were indicted for high treason, at Maidstone; the trial lasted two days, when O'Coigley was found guilty, and the rest of the prisoners were acquitted. Mr. O'Connor, however, was detained in custody, and conveyed to Ireland, on another charge of the same nature; he there made an ample confession of his guilt, and was banished from his native country for life.

to pass the bill, it must, from its nature, be necessary to pass it without delay;—it was his wish, therefore, that the bill should pass that day through its different stages, with a suitable pause at each, if required; and that it should be sent to the Lords for their concurrence. The bill of 1779 had passed with similar expedition, and he trusted that would be considered as a sufficient precedent.

It was observed by Mr. Tierney, that, however the proposed measure might be prudent and good in itself, the very extraordinary manner in which Mr. Pitt called upon the House to adopt it could not fail to excite alarms in their minds; such, at least, was the effect which it had produced in his. He had imagined that the augmentation of the navy was to be provided for in the usual way; or that, if any uncommon mode were to be resorted to for the attainment of that object, some intimation of it would be given to the House. When the precipitancy with which it was required to pass this bill had been urged on the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus act, Mr. Pitt condescended to use some arguments to prove it necessary; but, in the present case, no reason nor argument whatever was adduced. It was impossible for those who might be in possession of the protections in question to secrete themselves; indeed, the manner of going about it was altogether so extraordinary and objectionable, that he felt himself under the necessity of giving it his negative. He had heard no argument that proved its propriety, he knew of no sudden emergency that urged its necessity;—even if he had, some time ought to have been allowed him to weigh the force of such arguments, and to examine the nature of such an emergency, before he proceeded to give three or four votes on a measure of which no notice whatever had been given; and of which no idea had ever entered his mind.

If ever there were a measure submitted to Parliament, of a nature to preclude the necessity of argument, and to bear, on the very face of it, the most glaring impropriety of any previous notice, it was assuredly the measure in question. The country was threatened with an immediate invasion;—the fact was notorious;—it had been announced to Parliament by the King. It was the obvious duty, then, of the Minister,

to make every possible preparation for resisting and defeating such an attempt; and, more particularly so, to man, without delay, every vessel that was fit to be sent to sea. All that *pressing* could do had already been done; and a sufficient supply of hands had not been procured. It was known, that a great number of able men sheltered themselves against the effects of a press-warrant, by the protections which had, on various occasions, been granted; and without which they would have been subjected to the same process by which their fellow-seamen had been obtained for the service of their country. As the navy could not be manned with sufficient expedition for the purpose for which it was wanted, unless these protections were withdrawn, it was, obviously, the imperative duty of the Minister to urge the Parliament to withdraw them. The necessity of the measure, therefore, though Mr. Tierney professed not to perceive it, was evident and striking. But if Mr. Pitt had previously apprized the House of the nature of his intended motion, the very notice itself would have defeated his object; for it is most certain, that the persons enjoying the protection would have immediately profited by the premature and imprudent publication of the measure, to absent themselves from the places of their usual residence, and to elude the vigilance of the officers employed to search for them. The alledged *impossibility* of secreting themselves, so confidently urged by Mr. Tierney, without, however, a single argument to prove the justice of the allegation, stood contradicted by fact; experience having sufficiently demonstrated the facility of concealment, where such powerful motives subsisted for procuring it. It was clear, therefore, that the measure, to be rendered effective, could only be carried in the manner proposed by Mr. Pitt.

But Mr. Tierney, at the close of his speech, was thrown off his guard, and assigned the real motive of his opposition to the bill, and which must have operated equally on his mind, in whatever way it had been introduced to the notice of the House. If Mr. Pitt, he said, persisted in hurrying the bill through the House in the manner proposed, he must give it his decided negative, (however reluctantly he opposed any measure that was said to be necessary for the safety of the country) —*for*, (from what he had lately seen) he must view *all* the measures of Ministers as hostile to the liberty of the subject; and the present

measure he regarded with peculiar jealousy, as it went directly to rob them of the few remaining privileges which they were still permitted to enjoy. *

Thus, it is clear that Mr. Tierney's motive for opposing the bill was its alledged hostility to the liberty of the subject; and, as the bill contained nothing complex, and difficult to be understood, but a simple proposal to withdraw certain protections, the same motive must have produced the same opposition, whether the bill was hurried through the House with a precipitation justified by the emergency, or whether six months had been allowed for the discussion of its principle and object. A single reading of the bill must have been sufficient to shew whether, or no, it was hostile to the liberty of the subject;—Mr. Tierney had decided that it was so; and, as it was not of a nature to admit of modification, or change, delay, though it would have effectually defeated the object of the bill itself, could not have secured his support. It must, therefore, be concluded, that a desire to weigh the force of arguments, or to examine the nature of the emergency, constituted no part of the motive which induced him to propose such delay.

Mr. Pitt, in reply, observed, that if every measure, adopted against the designs of France, were to be considered as hostile to the liberty of this country, then, indeed, his idea of liberty differed very widely from that which seemed to be entertained by Mr. Tierney. He reminded the House, that, notwithstanding Mr. Tierney's assertion to the contrary, he had given notice of his intention, though he had not explained the precise object of his motion. It could not be fairly supposed that the present measure was to be brought forward, as the usual one, for augmenting the navy, as a bill for that purpose had been introduced ten days before, when he stated to the House, that, if they acceded to the proposed augmentation of the navy, they must adopt some vigorous measure to render that augmentation effectual, as nothing but a law of a rigorous nature could succeed in making the number of seamen complete.—After some other observations on the futility of Mr. Tierney's objections,

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, May 25, 1798, p. 561.

Mr. Pitt asked, if the measure were necessary, and if a notice of it would enable its objects to elude its effect, how could Mr. Tierney's opposition to it be accounted for, but from a desire to obstruct the defence of the country?

So natural was the inference implied in this question, that, if the premises were admitted, the conclusion could not be denied. Mr. Tierney, however, did not dispute the premises, but called Mr. Pitt to order, and, appealing to the Speaker, said, "This language, Sir, is surely not parliamentary, and upon you only, Sir, can I call for protection." It was to be expected that, in answer to this direct appeal, the Speaker, who is the guardian of order and decorum in the House, and who is, in the first instance, the judge of what is orderly and decorous, would have declared his opinion of the expression objected to. Instead of doing this, however, he contented himself with observing, that whatever had a *tendency* to throw suspicion on the sentiments of a Member, *if* conveyed in language that clearly marked that *intention*, such language was, without doubt, irregular and unparliamentary; but *if* it argued no such intention, there was no room for censuring it as disorderly; *if*, therefore, it was the opinion of *the House*, that such was the fair import of the language used by Mr. Pitt, they would judge of it accordingly, but they would first wait to hear Mr. Pitt's explanation.* The Speaker, here, did nothing more than state a general principle, without applying it, as he ought to have done, to the particular case which called for his interposition.—And it is much to be lamented, that he did not give his clear and direct opinion, whether the language of Mr. Pitt was parliamentary or unparliamentary, as such a decision might, probably, have prevented the disgraceful scene which ensued.

Mr. Pitt said, that he feared the House must wait a long time, if they waited for his explanation on the present subject. The sense of what he advanced was, that there was no distinction between the two cases in question. That, if notice were to be given of the measure under consideration, that notice would only serve to elude its execution; and, there-

* Wodfall's Reports, ubi suprà.

fore, no man could be justified to himself in opposing the necessary expedition which was to make the measure effectual; and, if he did oppose it, he must surely appear to obstruct the measure employed for the defence of the country. He knew very well, that it was unparliamentary to state the motives which actuated the opinions of Members, but it was impossible to go into arguments, in favour of a question, without sometimes hinting at the motives which influenced an opposition to it. He concluded by submitting to the judgment of the House the propriety and necessity of the arguments which he had urged, and he would not depart from any thing which he had advanced, by either retracting or explaining them. Nothing more was said upon this subject, at the time, and the bill, having been read three times, was sent to the House of Lords, who passed it the same day, and the next it received the royal assent.

The day after this debate Mr. Tierney sent a challenge to Mr. Pitt; the consequence of which was, that four of the Members of the House of Commons, whose peculiar duty it is to enforce, in all respects, a rigid observance of those laws which they are themselves employed in preparing, and forming, and to set an example of obedience, decency, and decorum to others, met on the *Sunday* following (May the 27th) to profane, in the grossest manner, the *Lord's Day*, by the perpetration of an act repugnant alike to the precepts of God, and the laws of the country. At three o'clock, *during the time of divine service*, Mr. Pitt, attended by Mr. Dudley Rider, and Mr. Tierney, accompanied by General Walpole, fought a duel on Wimbledon Common. The former received his adversary's fire, which, fortunately for the nation, failed to produce the intended effect, and discharged his own pistol in the air; when the seconds, in explanation of that Gothic code, which is not more repugnant to religion, than revolting to common sense, since it subjects the party injured to the same danger with the aggressor, declared that sufficient *satisfaction* had been given; though it would have puzzled a philosopher to discover in what the satisfaction consisted.*

* There were some peculiar circumstances attending this transaction which added to the disgrace that attached to it. At the precise time when the parties met in the field, a woman

This transaction was disgraceful to all the parties concerned in it; but most so to Mr. Pitt; since, however ordinary men might be excused, by the pliant courtesy of a weak and degenerate age, for an easy compliance with a custom to which ignorance and fashion had given the stamp and currency of honour, a mind like *his*, cast in no common mould, should have risen superior to a low and unworthy prejudice, the folly of which it must have perceived, and the wickedness of which it must have acknowledged.—Could Mr. PITT be led away by that *false shame* which subjects the decisions of reason to the controul of fear, and renders the admonitions of conscience subservient to the powers of ridicule?—Could he stoop to act a part which his judgment condemned, merely to escape the jests which he despised, or to avoid the censure which he disdained? If so, the despotism of custom, and the tyranny of prejudice, must speedily establish an universal sway on the wrecks of morality, and the ruins of religion. If no higher sentiment had intervened, a feeling of *patriotism* should have deterred him from rashly and unnecessarily risking a life which was specially devoted to the service of his country. It is with regret that I dwell on what I must consider as a blot in his life; but it would be a breach of duty slightly to pass over an instance of misconduct, which, under the sanction of his name, might be quoted as a precedent, and adopted as an example.

The House of Commons were not less blameable than the parties themselves. It most certainly behoved them either to pass their censure on the language which served as a pretext for this degrading scene, if they deemed it censurable, or to support the propriety of it by an express declaration, if they judged it proper. The duty which they neglected to discharge, it is reserved for the historian to perform. It must be

of fashion, who was connected with the Opposition, exclaimed, to some company who were present, "This is the important moment!" The emphasis and gesticulation which accompanied the exclamation sufficed to *characterise* the importance attached to the meeting. How the lady acquired her knowledge of a business, which the parties concerned generally deem it necessary to conduct with the greatest possible secrecy, can be easily conjectured by those who recollect the marked virulence of that party-spirit which prevailed, to so great an extent, at this period.

observed, then, that where motives are fairly imputable from language and conduct, the imputation of them becomes almost a matter of necessity; and it is a recorded truth, that the Members of Opposition, in either House, scarcely ever refrained from imputing to their political adversaries the very worst of motives, and from lavishing on them every abusive epithet, even where no impartial auditor could discern any fair ground of imputation. But they seem to have thought, that they had an exclusive right of censure, a patent for invective, a monopoly of abuse. And, if any one had the presumption to invade their privilege, they evinced the utmost rage, and death itself appeared, in their estimation, to be a punishment not too severe for such a violation of their charter! In the present instance, if the matter were coolly considered, and partially examined, there would be little difficulty in deciding which of the parties had the most reasonable ground of complaint,—he who was charged with a systematic attempt to rob his fellow-countrymen of their liberties, or he who was accused of acting as if he desired to obstruct the defence of his country! It might, with propriety too, be asked, how a man, who could so far forget the duties of a representative as to declare that *he had a general retainer against the Ministry*, and that *he never would vote one shilling of the supplies*, could expect to have his motives pass without suspicion, or could think himself injured by an inference which was the clear and necessary result of his declarations and conduct?

There was but one Member who exhibited the smallest indication of being impressed with a *just sense* of this transaction, both as it respected the House in particular, and the public in general. On the Wednesday following, Mr. Wilberforce declared his intention of bringing it before Parliament, with a view to prevent the recurrence of a similar disgrace; but finding, probably, no member disposed to second him in this laudable undertaking, and not feeling sufficient resolution to discharge his duty, without a promise of support, the matter was dropped.

One other measure connected with the internal defence of the kingdom, was brought forward, on the nineteenth of June, by Mr. Dundas. A formidable rebellion was, at this period, raging in Ireland,

and several actions had taken place between the Rebels and the King's troops. During these conflicts, a considerable number of the English Militia had volunteered their services for the suppression of the rebellion. And, in the actual state of the country, Ministers felt it their duty to bring the matter before Parliament. Accordingly, it was communicated to both Houses, by a Message from the Throne, and a Bill was brought into the House of Lords to enable his Majesty to accept the offer of such Militia regiments as should be willing to serve in Ireland. The bill was opposed by two descriptions of men:—first, by some of the country gentlemen who held commissions in the Militia, on the ground that the measure had a tendency to alter the nature of that constitutional force, by discouraging persons of rank and property from engaging in such a service.—And, secondly, by some of the leaders of the Opposition in both Houses, who appeared adverse to any measures of coercion against armed rebels, and disposed to inquire into the origin and cause of the rebellion, with a view to ascertain whether it was *justifiable* or not. * The bill, however, was approved by the great majority of Parliament, and, on the twenty-first of June, it passed the Commons, having previously passed the Upper House.

Of the miscellaneous business of the present Session, the proceedings respecting *the press*, are, from the importance of the subject itself, particularly worthy of notice. Indeed, there is no one circumstance connected with the internal polity of a state, which requires a greater exertion of skill, wisdom, and attention, to regulate, than *the freedom of the press*. This has been called the grand bulwark of a free state; and, when it is subject to proper regulations, the character is unquestionably just. It promotes that communication of individual ideas, which enlarges the stock of general knowledge; and it encourages that collision of sentiment whence the sparks of truth so frequently elicit. While, however, the beneficial effects of the freedom of the press cannot be too highly valued, or too loudly extolled, it must not be forgotten that it is a *relative* and not a *positive* good; in other words, that it is

* See the Speeches of Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Jekyll, and others, on the 19th and 21st of June, 1798, in Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports.

good only inasmuch as it tends to serve the cause of religion and civil liberty. Whenever it injures these, it loses its character, it forfeits its attributes, and becomes a serious evil;—the blessing is then converted into a curse. In the same manner, civil liberty itself, which is good only as it promotes the welfare and happiness of mankind, when carried to excess, degenerates into the most ferocious and insupportable tyranny. Hence arises the necessity of legislative restrictions for the correction of such excess. And the same consideration imposes the same duty on the legislature whenever the licentiousness of the press leads to the perversion of its object, and threatens the loss of its advantages. To prevent the *abuse* of a thing from becoming destructive of its *use*, constitutes one of the first duties of a Minister, and, at the same time, a duty which it is most difficult to discharge.

Two circumstances combined to render the regulation of the press an object of greater consequence at this time, than it was at any former period. The first of these was the French Revolution, in which the press was employed, as the most ready and most potent instrument, for subverting the established religion and government of the country. The second, was the vast increase of periodical publications in this country, but particularly of newspapers, which had a material effect in biassing the public opinion, and, indeed, in forming the public mind, on many points of national importance. In all former times, when Great Britain was engaged in a war, the conductors of English papers never so far lost sight of the spirit of Englishmen, nor of their duty as subjects, as to espouse the cause of the enemies of their country. But, unhappily, the new principles, which the founders of the French Revolution had set afloat in the world, had so far infected a numerous description of periodical writers, in every country, as to render them regardless of every duty, and to convert many of them into the advocates of rebellion and regicide. England, unfortunately, had not escaped the general infection; and it was, in consequence, seen, for the first time, that men, boasting the name, and enjoying the privileges, of Englishmen, enlisted, without a blush, under the banners of the enemy, and openly pleaded their cause, with equal zeal and assurance. Nay, the profligate spirit of the times was carried still further;—for there existed a paper, at this period, published

daily in the metropolis of the British Empire, notoriously in the pay of the French government, with which its proprietor, through the medium of an agent at Calais, maintained a regular correspondence;—and, although the importation and sale of English papers were generally prohibited by a legislative order, an office was publicly announced at Paris, for the sale of the particular paper in question.

The violence of these papers gave birth to two proceedings in Parliament, one a *judicial*, the other a *legislative*, measure. On the twenty-first of March, Lord Minto directed the attention of the House of Lords to a paragraph which had appeared, two days before, in a daily print, the Morning Chronicle, reflecting upon the honour of that House. It was, on his Lordship's motion, read to the House as follows:—"The House of Lords must now be admitted to be highly important as a political assembly, notwithstanding it has, of late, appeared to be nothing more than a chamber where the Minister's edicts are registered for form's sake. Some of their Lordships are determined to vindicate their importance. It is there that the dresses of the Opera dancers are regulated! One of the Roman Emperors recommended to the Senate, when they were good for nothing else, to discuss what was sauce for a turbot. To regulate the length of a petticoat is a much more genteel employment." This paragraph was resolved to be a gross and scandalous libel upon the House, and the proprietor and printer, James Perry, and John Lambert, having been brought before the House, were asked what they had to say in their own defence. Lambert expressed his sorrow at having unintentionally inserted the paragraph which had offended the House; and Perry declared his utter ignorance of the paragraph, until complaint was made of it, and he therefore hoped for that clemency, which was the characteristic of the dignified and moral justice of their Lordships. When they had withdrawn, Lord Minto accused the Morning Chronicle of a systematic endeavour to undermine the constitution of Great Britain, by its panegyrics on the doctrine of anarchy and terror, brought forward for discussion by the revolution in France; and was proceeding to prove that even the war itself might, in some degree, be imputed to the instrumentality of that paper, when he was called to order by the Duke of Leeds, on the ground that his Lord-

ship had no right to advert to any thing which did not form the actual matter of complaint; though it must be evident, when the ground of consideration was the quantum of punishment, that an offence which formed part of a destructive system for the subversion of establishments, required to be treated with greater severity than one which stood, insulated as it were, a mere solitary crime. Lord Minto concluded by moving, that John Lambert and James Perry were guilty of a high breach of privileges of the House, and that they should be fined fifty pounds each, and be imprisoned, in Newgate, for three months.

The motion was opposed by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Derby, both of whom deemed the punishment proposed too severe; and both of whom avowed their personal acquaintance with Perry, spoke of him in terms of regard, and vouched for the soundness of his political principles. The Earl even peremptorily asserted, that he never employed either his pen or his paper to undermine the civil or religious establishments of the country; that the Morning Chronicle was distinguished for its regard to the decencies of private life, and by its disdain of all scandal on individuals, and of those licentious personalities by which the peace of families was destroyed. The Duke insisted on the proprietor's inviolate attachment to the British Constitution, and on the uniformity of his language and conduct, during the whole of the French Revolution. The Marquis of Lansdowne, and the Duke of Norfolk, took the same side of the question. The Marquis considered the libellous paragraph as a mere *jeu d'Esprit*, marked by levity, with some wit; and the Duke extended his approbation to the general conduct of the paper.

The praises, constantly bestowed on these noble persons, in the columns of the paper in question, might have easily misled those who were unacquainted with the solemnity of judicial proceedings in the first court of judicature in the kingdom, to ascribe their sentiments, on the present occasion, to a laudable emotion of gratitude;—instead of considering them as the genuine dictates of impartial justice. On the other hand, Lord Sydney characterized the Morning Chronicle as a scandalous paper, which he would not admit into his house; and the Lord Chancellor observed, that the paragraph in question was not entitled to

the character of wit, or even of pleasantry; it was, in his estimation, a paragraph of dull malignity, and one of a series of attempts to undermine the authority of the House with the public. The House rejected the amendment proposed by the Duke of Bedford, for reducing the term of imprisonment to one month, by sixty-nine votes to eleven; after which the original motion was carried; and the prisoners were committed to Newgate.

Perhaps there was no question which was discussed during the session, that marked more strongly, than this, the spirit of party, which actuated the leading members of Opposition, in their Parliamentary conduct. The paper, for the soundness of the principles of which they thus solemnly pledged themselves, had, from the first dawn of the French Revolution, lavished the most fulsome adulation on its founders and supporters; had praised, without discrimination, and without measure, all the successive rulers of the regicide republic; and, so far from having made, as the Earl of Derby asserted, no attempt to undermine either the religious or the civil establishments of the country, it had invariably displayed an inveterate hostility to both, had constantly pleaded the cause of the French, and sought to render the most sacred maxims of religion and morality the objects of derision and scorn. *

The *legislative* measure respecting the press, to which reference has been made, arose from a libellous paragraph, in an evening print, *(The Courier,)* accusing the British government of having treated the French Prisoners with the greatest cruelty. This charge gave rise to an investigation, by a Committee of the House of Commons, who, after they had examined witnesses, and gained every possible information on the subject, pronounced it to be a most false and infamous fabrication. It was then determined to bring the author of this foul libel on the country to justice; but the Attorney-General, to whom, of course, the prosecution was entrusted, could find no ostensible person upon whom he could charge the guilt. In short, every attempt to discover the proprietor of the paper proved fruitless. It remained, therefore, either to suffer the

* See Appendix C.

most daring attacks upon the Government and Constitution of the country to pass with impunity, or to adopt some measure for facilitating the ends of public justice, by having some person or persons who should be responsible for the contents of every publication. To require this, was to impose no restrictions on the press; was to introduce no change into the law of libels; was not to make that libellous which the existing law did not already declare to be so; nor, in short, to adopt any regulation which was not compatible with the utmost latitude of civil liberty, as it regards the press.

For this purpose the Attorney-General, early in April, introduced a bill into the House of Commons, the *title* of which was, "A bill for preventing the mischiefs arising from newspapers being printed and published by persons unknown, and for regulating them in other respects;" and the object of which he truly professed to be, *to secure and to preserve the liberty of the press*;—for, certainly, every restraint imposed on *licentiousness* is a security afforded to *liberty*. In order to secure the purpose of the bill it was rendered necessary that the proprietors, (or, where there were several proprietors, *two* of them, having the largest portion of the property,) and printers of all papers, should register their names and places of abode at the Stamp-Office, which register was to be a sufficient proof of their being proprietors and printers, in a Court of Law; and it was required that one paper should be regularly sent to the Stamp-Office, there to be preserved to prove, if necessary, the publication of any paper containing libellous matter. There were some other regulations of more minute objects, all tending to the same point. In supporting the propriety of this measure, the Attorney-General stated a fact too important to be omitted in a History of the Times. He produced to the House a parcel of unstamped newspapers which had been found in a neutral vessel, bound to France; and which papers contained information, which, if any one had written and sent in another form to the enemy, he would have committed the highest crime of which a man could be guilty. In one of them was a letter, which noticed the intended departure of the West-India fleet, under the inadequate convoy of only two frigates; and expressing, at the same time, great anxiety about the safety of this fleet. In another article it

was stated, that as the people of England were about to be raised in a mass, the French would not be such fools as to invade this country, but would go to Ireland. There could not be a doubt respecting the *intent* of these articles, which contained both information and advice, highly useful and important to the enemy, thus rendering newspapers the means of committing high treason with impunity. To prevent these enormous evils, it was proposed, by the Attorney-General, to prohibit the exportation of newspapers.

In the short discussion which followed this motion, Mr. Tierney stated himself to have been commissioned by the Editor of *The Courier* to say, that he had not the most distant idea, that the matter of the libellous paragraph was false. This acknowledgement of Mr. Tierney's drew a call upon him from Lord Temple, to state the name of the Editor to whom he had referred. The paper his Lordship described as a scandalous outrage on law, morality, religion, and justice. It was the echo of France and propagated, with unyielding industry, the monstrous misrepresentations of the French Directory, and their detestable principles. His Lordship, therefore, very reasonably, thought that Mr. Tierney would fail in his duty, as a Member of that House, if he hesitated to give the information which had been requested, in order to bring such a "SCOUNDREL" as that to justice.*

The circumstances under which this call, by one Member of the House on another, was made, must be duly considered before its propriety can be ascertained. His Majesty's Attorney-General had just declared to the House, that, having discovered in The *Courier* a most atrocious libel, charging the government with the infliction of cruelties on the French prisoners, whom the chance of war had thrown into their hands,—a charge eminently calculated to afford a specious pretext to the French Directory, for the truly diabolical treatment to which they had subjected English prisoners in France, and to render that treatment, if possible, still more barbarous,—he had felt it to be his duty to institute a prosecution against the paper. In this attempt, however, he had failed, from

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, April 4, 1798.

his inability to discover any person to whom a legal responsibility would attach.—The crime, therefore, must pass with impunity, and the ends of public justice be defeated. A Member of the House of Commons then rises in his seat, and declares his knowledge of, and acquaintance with, the offender who had thus escaped the search of the Attorney-General and the violated laws of his country. Under these circumstances, another Member, anxious, as every good subject must be, to prevent any interruption of the course of justice, and to remove any impediment to the execution of the laws, (for such interruptions and such impediments are public grievances, since the avowed object of all law is the punishment and the prevention of offences, "which are either directly or indirectly injurious to civil society,") calls upon the first to name the culprit, in order that he may be *brought to justice.* How far any Member of Parliament has a right to screen a public offender it is not necessary to inquire; but it may be asserted, that a Member, in seeking to bring a culprit to justice, can be guilty of no breach of duty, without any stretch of presumption, or infringement of prerogative.—Lord Temple, then, must appear, in the present instance, to have acted strictly within the line of his public duty, and, consequently, to have been entitled both to respect and to support.—The question is here considered in the abstract, without reference to the general character of the paper, forming the subject of enquiry, which, however, far from being overcharged by Lord Temple, had exhibited, during the greater part of the interval between the commencement of the war and the period of this discussion, the symbol of sedition, and the type of treason.

Mr. Tierney, however, with a querulousness that marked most of his speeches at this period, told Lord Temple that he knew not whether he had a right to put the question; but certain it was, that *he* would not turn *common informer* * by answering it. He did not suppose any other

* *A common informer* is a man who institutes a prosecution with a view to pecuniary emolument;—Qui tam pro domino rege quam pro *seipso*, &c. Now, though Mr. Tierney, by affording the means of bringing the offender to justice, would have discharged his duty *as well to his Lord the King as to himself*, it would require uncommon ingenuity to discover how, by so doing, he could have subjected himself to the denomination of a *common informer.*

Member would have asked a question so delicate, and which it would be so improper to answer. He had often heard the noble Lord talk of his stake in the country, but *that was a stake stolen from the public hedge.* * The Editor of The Courier, Mr. Tierney alledged to be a man of respectability; and though Lord Temple took the liberty, in that House, of calling a man a *scoundrel*, who had not the means of answering him, he would not, perhaps, have ventured to say so before him. He considered the conduct of the noble Lord as reprehensible, and cautioned him not to ask questions flippantly, lest he should receive answers which he might not like. The Solicitor-General and Mr. Windham supported the propriety of Lord Temple's question; though they did not deny the right of Mr. Tierney to refuse an answer,—a right from which men often derived great benefit before a magistrate, or a bench of justices.

Mr. Windham truly remarked, that the term *informer* was one which many persons found an interest in reprobating; with respect, however, to himself, and to those who had the honour to be of his Majesty's Privy Council, they were bound by an oath to make discovery of every traitorous machination that came within their knowledge.

Mr. Tierney, in the excess of his zeal, had wandered from the question, and, adverting to an indictment preferred against a bookseller, for publishing a most seditious and inflammatory pamphlet, written by Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, and purporting to be an answer to the Bishop of Llandaff, he reprobated one of the counts which stated, that Johnson, (the publisher) wishing to degrade and vilify the government, did express a doubt of the sincerity of Mr. Pitt in the late negotiation. When the Attorney-General had corrected his statement, Mr. Pitt himself defended the measure before the House, to which no man could object but Mr. Sheridan, who, after a long absence, had come down to state broadly,

* *To steal a stake from a hedge*, whether public or private, is to commit an unlawful act, punishable by statute. But what this could have to do, either literally or metaphorically, with the stake which Lord Temple had in the country, that is, with his rank and fortune, it is not easy to imagine.

that no prosecution at all ought to be instituted against the abuses of the press. It was no wonder, however, that *he* should object to it, as, upon his own principles, no check should be given to the circulation of the foulest private slander, the most undisguised sedition, the most pointed treason, and the most daring attempts to overthrow the established Constitution of the country. In answer to Mr. Tierney's remark, that it was a new thing to consider as a libel the assertion, that a person who had the honour to be high in his Majesty's Councils, and to have a considerable share in the direction of public affairs, was insincere in a negotiation for peace; he observed, the charge had been made after Parliament, upon solemn discussion, had pronounced, that the negotiation had been conducted with the most striking proofs, and accompanied with the most convincing pledges, of sincerity. It was a charge, therefore, upon that Parliament which had borne testimony to the sincerity of those to whom the negotiation was confided. The observation of Mr. Tierney, however, had not the recommendation of novelty; Mr. Pitt recollected to have seen it imputed to a learned gentleman, (Mr. Erskine,) and represented to have been made at a certain club, (the Whig Club.) It was, indeed, very likely to come from a person who was the advocate and the patron of all their libels. He would venture to meet that learned gentleman upon the point, and, if he did come and state, in his place, the charge which he had asserted to be innocent, he should be ready to shew him, that he could as little justify it as a matter of fact, as he could defend it as a point of law. Never, he was sure, had Mr. Erskine, amidst all the libels which he had been employed to defend, been engaged in the justification of a more flagitious libel than that for which it was understood he was now retained. Compared with the other contents of the pamphlet in question, the charge alluded to was perfect innocence. It was the most daring attack upon the whole Constitution of the country; it vilified and degraded our national spirit; it exhorted the people not to defend themselves against the enemy; and was the most infamous collection of sedition and treason that ever was published.* It was not matter of surprize to him, therefore, to be

* Of this pamphlet, here so justly characterized by Mr. Pitt, Johnson was afterwards tried as the publisher, and Wakefield as the author; the former was sentenced to six months' impri-

libelled by those who praised the enemies, and reviled the establishments, of his country. If Mr. Erskine, who had asserted that it was no libel, would come down to the House, and repeat his assertion there, he would tell him, that he had uttered a libel which he could not justify by argument. * He would not pledge his character, as a lawyer, upon that doctrine; nor attempt to shew that, in point of fact, there was any reason to doubt the sincerity of Ministers. Would any man say, that it was not to alienate the affections of the people from the Government, to tell them that the Executive power was inattentive to their interests; and that the Legislature sanctioned the conduct of those by whom the public happiness was betrayed? Would any man say, that charges such as these were not grossly libellous, and did not tend to bring into disrepute the whole Government and Constitution of the country?

Mr. Tierney, in reply, asked Mr. Windham whether he meant to say, that he was connected with a traitor? In answer to which, Mr. Windham simply observed, that the paper was treasonable, and although Mr. Tierney had acknowledged his acquaintance with the Editor, he had refused to state his name. "If the Editor be really guilty of high treason," said Mr. Tierney, "indict him, and call me as a witness." He seems to have forgotten that the very ground of the inquiry was the impracticability of finding any one against whom an indictment could be preferred; and it would have been a novel mode of commencing a criminal process, by finding the Bill of Indictment before the person of the culprit could be identified.

The Bill was brought in, and, after some farther opposition, passed both Houses, and received the Royal Sanction in the month of June, at the end of which the Parliament was prorogued.

sonment in the King's Bench. The latter to a longer confinement in Dorchester Castle. The party, however, made the author amends for his sufferings, by a subscription, which was said to amount to *four thousand pounds*.

* Mr. Erskine was too prudent to accept this challenge. The House of Commons was certainly not the theatre of *his* triumphs.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Retrospective View of Irish affairs—Ireland governed by the great Proprietors of the soil—Restrictive Laws against Popery—Conduct of the Irish Aristocracy highly embarrassing to the English Ministers—Its advantages stated—Tranquillity of the Country for seventy years—Growth of the Protestant Religion—Indignant rejection by the Irish Parliament of Mr. Burke's Bill for improving, in certain respects, the situation of the Papists—Remarkable observation of Serjeant Dennis on that subject—Lord Townshend creates a rival power to counteract the influence of the Aristocracy—Policy of this conduct questioned—Extraordinary rapacity of one of the Leaders of the New Democratic Party—Earl Temple's first Administration—His wise and judicious conduct in the correction of Public abuses—Attack of the Opposition on the Attorney-General—His memorable reply—Earl Temple's second Administration—Creates numerous Enemies by the firmness and integrity of his conduct—Mr. Grattan's attack on the Established Church—Declaims against Tithes—His ignorance of the subject—Origin and proceedings of the Right Boys—Persecution of the Protestant Clergy—Increased by Mr. Grattan's invectives against them—The Clergy defended by Mr. Brown and Mr. Parsons—Their moderation proved by the low rate of the Composition for Tithes—Wretched sophistry of Mr. Grattan exposed—Reflections on the inadequate price of labour in Ireland—The Abolition of Tithes prejudicial to the Landholder—Bill for preventing tumultuous Assemblies brought in by Mr. Fitzgibbon—Violently opposed by Mr. Grattan—His misrepresentation of the English Riot Act—The Bishop of Cloyne defended against Mr. Secretary Orde and Mr. Curran—Bill carried—Impolitic measure of economy on the part of the Viceroy—The seals are given to Mr. Fitzgibbon, who is created Earl of Clare—*The White Boys* and *Defenders*—Their origin and outrageous conduct—They are rather encouraged than opposed by the country gentlemen, who interfere to pervert the course of justice—Ferocious conduct of the Papists in Armagh—Their inveterate hatred of the Protestants exemplified by their atrocious murder of an innocent Family at Forkhill—Remarks on that occurrence—The Papists seize the Arms of the Protestants wherever they can find them—Resolutions of the Grand Juries on the subject—The *Defenders* look to France for assistance—Petition of the *Catholic Committee* to the Viceroy, signed by the principal Nobility and Gentry of that persuasion—The Papists condemn the Petition as too mild and moderate—They erase the Earl of Kenmare's name from the Committee—Schism in the Committee—The *Catholic Society* formed—Sir Hercules Langrishe censures the conduct of the Papists—Limited nature of the claims now advanced by the *Catholic Committee*—The House of Commons refuse to receive the Petition of the Papists as disrespectful and indecorous—Another Petition presented, and rejected by two hundred and two votes against twenty-five—Meetings of the Papists in all quarters—The Parliament repeal several of the

restrictive Laws against the Papists—The Papists rise in their claims—Endeavour to form a National Convention—The Convention assembles at Dublin and send Delegates to the King—The Convention condemned as unconstitutional—The Convention dissolved after appointing the *Committee of the Catholics in Ireland*, four of whom are afterwards accused of Treasonable practices—Alarm of the Protestants—Loyal Addresses of the Grand Juries—Spirited Appeal of the Corporation of Dublin to the Protestants of Ireland—Mr. Burke's predilection in favour of the Papists—His son is appointed Secretary to the Catholic Committee—Mr. Burke persuades Mr. Pitt to make farther concessions to the Irish Papists—Consequent inconsistency of the Irish Parliament—Mr. Hobart introduces a Bill for granting the elective franchise, and other privileges, to the Papists—The inaccuracy of his statements, and the fallacy of his arguments, exposed—Dangerous principles of the Papists proved from their own publications—The Bill opposed by Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. De la Touche—Mr. George Knox moves to admit Papists to seats in Parliament—The Motion supported by Major Doyle and Colonel Hutchinson—Rejected by one hundred and sixty-three votes against sixty-nine—The Bill passes the Commons—Is supported, in the Lords, by the Bishop of Killala, who proves his ignorance of the origin and object of the Penal Laws against Papists—He is answered by Lord Clare, who imputes his misrepresentations to his want of knowledge—The Bill passes the Lords—Conduct of the Irish Parliament censured—State of the Irish Papists at this period—Continued prevalence of disaffection—The *United Irishmen*—Bills passed for prohibiting the Importation of Arms and Ammunition, and for preventing unlawful Assemblies—Revolutionary projects of the *United Irishmen*—They adopt the principles of the German Illuminati—Union of the Papists and Presbyterians—The motives of both Parties—The Insurgents attack the King's Troops—Vigorous measures of Lord Westmoreland, for suppressing the Insurrection—Spirited conduct of Mr. John Giffard, the High Sheriff of Dublin—Papers of the *United Irishmen* seized—Apprehension, and condemnation, of Mr. Jackson—Lord Westmoreland recalled—Lord Fitzwilliam, Viceroy.

[1798.] The state of Ireland stood foremost among those objects of internal policy which claimed the attention of Mr. Pitt, at this momentous period of his administration. It was such, indeed, as threatened a dissolution of the tie by which, most fortunately for the two countries, this interesting portion of the now united empire was bound to Great Britain. A variety of causes concurred to produce the explosion which had just burst forth, and which produced scenes of desolation and slaughter, which it is one of the most painful duties of history to record.

From the reign of William the Third, to the period of Lord Townshend's administration, which began in 1767, the Irish nation had

been governed by the great proprietors of the soil. Having been rescued by the revolution of 1688, and by the subsequent conquests of the British Monarch, from the dominion of popery, and from that state of oppression and of slavery, which it is so well calculated to cherish and to promote, the noblemen and gentlemen, in whom the landed property was chiefly vested, determined to maintain these advantages, by making Ireland a protestant country, or, at least, to enact such strong restrictive laws as, in their judgment, were necessary to prevent them from being replunged into that situation whence they had, so recently, and with such difficulty, been extricated.

From an aristocracy so circumstanced, the infirmity of human nature could scarcely allow the expectation, that passion, prejudice, and self-interest, would not occasionally triumph over the higher and nobler considerations of public justice and of public good. In many instances, too, the conduct which that conscious strength derived from an unity of property and of action emboldened them to pursue, was the source of great trouble and embarrassment to the English Minister. The majority which they commanded in Parliament made it impossible to carry any measure without their consent; and such consent was not always to be obtained, without a grant of personal advantages, which, unlike mercy, blessed neither him that gave, nor him that received, them. If, however, these evils occasionally flowed from the overpowering influence of the aristocracy, it was, on the other hand, productive of many great and important public advantages. The connection of the aristocracy, with some of the first families in Great Britain, rendered them extremely anxious to preserve and to strengthen the bond of union between the two countries, while the great stake which they held in Ireland prevented them from adopting any measure by which their particular interests could be materially affected. But the greatest proof of the general wisdom of their policy, notwithstanding their occasional aberrations from the strict line of duty, is to be found in that state of perfect tranquillity in which Ireland remained for the long term of seventy years; during which period the Protestant religion flourished, * and popery was reduced to so

* So resolute was the government of Ireland, during the period in question, to maintain and uphold the Protestant ascendancy, that when Mr. Burke (then Secretary to the Viceroy,

low an ebb, that thousands of proselytes were yearly received into the bosom of the Established Church; and that no man who could give his son anything like an independent income, or who wished to place him in the army, or in any of the liberal professions, brought him up a Papist.

When these circumstances are considered, the policy of Lord Townshend's conduct, in raising up a rival influence against the old aristocracy may, probably, be questioned. This is not the place to detail the means which he employed for the accomplishment of that object. It is sufficient, for the purpose of this history, to observe, that he called into situations of trust and power, the lower class of gentry, and afforded countenance to those adventurers, who abound in every country, and who, having no other support than what they derived from their own talents, and the Viceroy's favour, were most likely to pay implicit obedience to his commands. Hence sprang a new race of nobles, and hence originated that democratic party, which afterwards made so much noise in Parliament. *

From the period of Lord Townshend's administration, to the commencement of the American rebellion, the aristocratic and democratic

the Earl of Halifax) introduced into Parliament a Bill for allowing Papists to obtain better security for their property than they could obtain under the existing laws, it was received with indignation by the House, and Serjeant Dennis (who was afterwards promoted to a peerage) exclaimed, "What! shall we, at this day, when, by restrictions, on the one hand, and encouragement on the other, the whole kingdom is becoming Protestant, offer any favour or encouragement to popery, and undo all that the wisdom of our ancestors and our own exertions have effected? The man who consents so to act, should be branded as an enemy to his King and country."—These were the sentiments of government at the time.

* Lord Townshend soon found that the rapaciousness of some of the new characters, whom he brought forward for this purpose, exceeded all bounds. One of them, after having extorted from him a variety of grants, applied to him for a majority of horse, to give as a portion to one of his daughters; upon which the indignant representative of royalty expressed a hearty wish that this importunate patriot would change sides, that he might no longer be subjected to his incessant claims; and declared that his avarice was so insatiate, that were he to give him England and Ireland, as estates, he would ask for the Isle of Man for a kitchen garden.

parties found no subject for contention which called forth a display of their respective strength. During that rebellion, the creation of a large volunteer force, many of whom refused to lay down their arms, when called upon by government so to do, and were joined by a number of Papists, gave rise to disturbances, which have been noticed in a preceding volume. * The democratic party endeavoured, but too successfully, to render them the tools of faction, and the means of affording great uneasiness to the government.

As soon as it was known to Ireland that the reins of government had been placed in the hands of Mr. Pitt, the greatest joy pervaded the minds of all who recollected the wise and vigorous administration of his illustrious father. The nation was disposed to consign its past misfortunes to oblivion, and to be cheered by the flattering prospect of better times. The hopes which it had been thus led to cherish, were further strengthened by the wise conduct of Earl Temple, who was now appointed Viceroy. This nobleman, at the very commencement of his administration, began seriously to enforce a correction of official abuses in the various departments of the state, and to establish a rigid system of economy in the public expenditure. By this honourable conduct, by this faithful discharge of his duty, he raised a host of enemies. All the peculators, their friends, and all who hoped to become peculators themselves, declared war against him, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to display their resentment with effect;—for corruption had risen to such a height, that those who practised it boldly threw off the mask of shame, and had even the audacity to *justify* the most scandalous frauds.

At the opening of the Irish Parliament, in 1784, the democratic party raised a violent outcry against the Judges and the Attorney-General, for having proceeded, by way of attachment, against the Sheriffs, who, in breach of their duty, had summoned popular meetings on the requisition of the delegates of faction. † Mr. Fitzgibbon, however, met and repelled the attack, with that intrepid spirit which distinguished the

* See Chapter VI. Vol. I.

† See Vol. I.

whole of his conduct in all the high stations which he, successively, filled; and with that gigantic strength of argument which marked all his parliamentary orations. "I am not a friend, Sir," said this firm champion of the laws, "to skirmishing, or to speaking to questions "not immediately before the House; but I think it necessary to shew, "that what has been said about issuing *Letters Missive*, is unfounded, "and that what has been said about Mr. Pitt may be unfounded too.

"The virtuous assembly of which I have spoken," (the assembly held at Dublin for the appointment and instruction of delegates to a national congress) "appeal to the people, and request them to elect delegates to a "national congress, to reform the Parliamentary representation of the "kingdom. To this great work, they invite men of all descriptions; "Tinkers and Tailors, Hackney-Coachmen and Chimney-Sweepers— "'Come unto us all ye that labour, and are heavy laden with the burden "of the present Constitution—come unto us, ye virtuous reformers, of "every denomination—your plans cannot be too wild, your intentions "cannot be too seditious;—come unto us, we will receive you with "open arms.'—Farther, as it may not be uninteresting, I shall read their "names to the Committee;—James Napper Tandy; John Tabot Ashen- "hurst, a Notary; John Peree, an Attorney; William Wenman Seward, "an Attorney's Clerk; George Joseph Brown, an obscure Barrister; "Ignatius Weldon, a Popish Merchant, &c.;—William Smith; Wil- "liam Arnold, a Weaver; William Buck, Sheriff's Clerk; John Ball; "John Hodson; Charles Walker; Arthur Neville, a Land Surveyor. "And from this Committee of thirteen select men, writs were issued to "the Sheriffs of the different counties, commanding them to return "representatives for their bailiwicks to meet in national congress, to be "holden in Dublin, on the 25th of October, 1784: which writs were "returnable into the hanaper of James Napper Tandy, Esq.—witness "our trusty and well-beloved William Wenman Seward, who, in the "course of my practice, I know to be an Attorney's Clerk. But, "grievous to relate, very few of the Sheriffs of the counties were actu- "ated by the spirit of James Napper Tandy; consequently, very few "counties returned members to *his* Parliament. The Sheriff, indeed, of "the county of Dublin, took upon him to prostitute his power to the

" purposes of faction—a power with which the Crown had invested " him for the benefit of the subject. But I have taught him, as I will " every man who presumes to act illegally, that the law is too strong " for them all.

" In prosecuting the Sheriff of Dublin, I adopted the mode by " attachment, because it is the mode pointed out by the law to prevent " the abuse of authority delegated by the King to his officer, for the " maintenance of law. I did not appeal to juries, because, before the " decision of juries could be obtained, much mischief might have been " done; a vile example in sedition might have misled other Sheriffs; " and, therefore, the King's Attorney-General wished to shew the other " Sheriffs of the kingdom, what they were to expect if they abused " their trust. And, I say, that the government which would suffer the " King's officers, the Sheriffs, to put themselves at the head of a pitiful " faction, and, under colour of their authority, promote the seditious " designs of a congress, composed of James Napper Tandy and his " associates, might be made answerable to this House for its pusila- " nimity. The House would have a right to ask them—' Do you, who " are the executive power of the state, countenance this sedition? Is " it abetted by the Crown? Does the King appeal from his Parliament " to a congress?'—And I, for myself, declare, that, under a government " which could be so weak and dastardly, as to wink at such proceedings, " I would not hold, for one hour, the office which I have the honour " to fill.

" When it was proposed to Mr. Pitt that he should enter into a " general resolution, declaratory of the necessity of a Parliamentary " Reform, he declared he never would enter into general resolutions, " until an amended mode was first agreed to."

The clamorous patriots were silenced by the manly eloquence of this steady friend to the Constitution, and, on that occasion, all their hopes were disappointed, all their plans frustrated, and all their attempts rendered abortive. The democratic party, however, triumphed in the fate of the commercial resolutions, which were afterwards submitted to

Parliament, and which, though carried by a small majority in Parliament, were afterwards abandoned by the Ministry. *

In the autumn of 1787, Earl Temple, recently created Marquis of Buckingham, was again promoted to the vice-regal dignity. And he again took with him to Ireland, the same manly resolution to extirpate corruption from the land, which, during his former administration, he had manifested in so signal a manner. He once more set himself seriously to work to correct the abuses which existed in the various departments of the State: confiding in his own integrity, relying on the purity of his intentions, and utterly regardless of consequences, he spared no peculator, however high, nor overlooked any defaulter, however contemptible. But this conduct, at once so necessary and so praiseworthy, raised up against him a swarm of malignant enemies, who never forgot nor forgave his patriotic exertions.

In the first session of Parliament, under the administration of the Marquis of Buckingham, Mr. Grattan, having nothing else to complain of, made a most violent attack upon the Established Church. Tithes were the subject upon which he chose to display his powers of eloquence, and to exhaust his stores of invective;—though he displayed a total ignorance of their origin, their nature, and their tendency. At this very time, and for several months before, a banditti, who assumed the appellation of *Right-Boys*, committed the most atrocious enormities in the South-west of Ireland. Their proceedings, chiefly directed against the Protestant Clergy, were not the wild and desultory efforts of a rash and ignorant peasantry; but a dark and deep-laid scheme, planned by men skilled in the law, and conversant with the artifices by which it might be evaded with impunity. These men suggested to the farmers the propriety of entering into a combination, under the sanction of an oath, neither to purchase their tithes, nor to assist any clergyman in taking them in kind. Some of the Protestant gentry, to their infinite disgrace, actuated by the most selfish and dishonest motives, secretly encouraged the outrages of those insurgents; and others connived at their excesses,

* See Vol. I.

until they proceeded, by a very natural deduction from their first principle, to resist the payment of rent, and the recovery of money by legal process; and then, alive to the calls of self-interest, though callous to the dictates of honour, these proprietors came tardily forward in support of the law. *

The form of summons to the Clergy, to draw their tithes, framed with legal accuracy, was printed at Cork, and circulated with great diligence through many parts of Munster. In order to render the combination more extensive, some of the most intelligent members of it administered oaths to the lower class of people, at the Romish Chapels, † and in the market towns.

The consequence of this illegal combination, and of the scandalous outrages which flowed from it, was, that numbers of the Protestant Clergy, particularly in the county of Cork, forsook their parishes, and fled to the great towns for refuge. Emboldened by success, the insurgents proceeded from one act of enormity to another; they deprived the Protestants of their arms; they levied money for the purchase of ammunition; they forced open the gaols; they destroyed stacks of hay and corn; and they set fire to houses, especially to such as were occupied by the army. At last they carried their audacity so far as to threaten to starve the cities of Limerick and Cork, and the town of Ennis, the capital of Clare; and they adopted measures for preventing the farmers from supplying those places with provisions.

It was during the prevalence of this insurrection, that Mr. Grattan chose to join in the popular clamour against tithes, and to direct his declamatory rage against the oppressed and persecuted Clergy of the Established Church; while his inflammatory speeches, being printed and industriously circulated among the insurgents, increased the acrimony of their malice, sharpened the bitterness of their revenge, and rooted more

* Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland, by Sir Richard Musgrave, 4to. p. 44.

† Idem Ibid. Plowden's Historical View of the State of Ireland, Vol. II. p. 155.

deeply in their bosoms those principles of hostility which they had been taught to encourage against the profession of the Protestant faith.

Mr. Grattan's mistatements, however, were not suffered to pass without correction, nor his misrepresentations without reproof. The Members of the University effectually vindicated the clergy from the foul aspersions which had been cast upon them; and one of them, Mr. Parsons, now Lord Ross, declared, he would never bear to see the Established Church brought, like a delinquent, to the Bar, and arraigned; nor to have false evidences brought to asperse, to defame, and to calumniate, the Ministers of the Gospel. The other member, Mr. Brown, put an end to the debate, by stating the actual rate of Tithes, in those parts of the kingdom where the greatest violence was displayed.—He said, that the Tithe of Potatoes varied according to the goodness of the crop, from four shillings to eight shillings * per acre; that of Wheat

* Mr. Grattan, in his speech on this occasion, had stated the Tithe of Potatoes to be from eight to twelve shillings per acre.—But it must strike every English reader as extraordinary, that the very moderate modus, or price taken in lieu of Tithes, should have formed a subject of such heavy complaint. The land, on which this modus was imposed, was admitted, on both sides, to let from six to seven pounds per acre;—so that the Tithe did not amount to more than from one-fifteenth to one-sixteenth of the rent. Whereas in England it is no uncommon thing to find nine shillings per acre for Tithe, imposed on land, which does not let for more than forty shillings, which is more than a fifth part of the rent; and, in some instances, where the Tithe is in the hands of a Lay Impropriator, as much as thirty shillings per acre has been exacted for the Tithe of Wheat. When the Tithe was exchanged in Scotland, in the 17th century, for a different mode of paying the clergy, it was rated at a fifth part of the net rent.

It is curious to observe the wretched sophistry employed by Mr. Grattan in the speech in question, in drawing a distinction between the effect of a low Tithe of eight shillings an acre, and a high rent of seven pounds, on the industry and comfort of the Farmer. The latter he described as a *compulsion on labour*, and the former as a *penalty*. Whatever novelty there may be in such a remark, common sense revolts from it; and there can be no doubt, that if land which lets for £ 7. an acre, subject to a Tithe of 8*s*. were Tithe-free, it would let for £ 7. 8*s*. an acre. The abolition of Tithe, therefore, would only go to enrich the landlord, without contributing, in the smallest degree, to the relief of the Tenant.

It has, indeed, been not only asserted, but satisfactorily proved, by an intelligent writer of this period, that the abolition or reduction of Tithe would *increase*, instead of diminishing, *the burdens of the real Landholder and Farmer*. He adduces instances of certain lands n Ireland,

from four shillings to six shillings; Barley from three shillings to five; Oats from eighteen pence to three shillings; and Meadow Land from one shilling to three per acre.

which had been discharged from the payment of Tithes, by various exemptions having been, heretofore, the estates of monasteries and abbies, which, being ecclesiastical corporations, could hold lands exempt from the payment of Tithes. When such lands were to be let, they were always let at an advanced rent, (as is constantly the case in England) on account of their being *Tithe-free*, and were advertised to be let exempt from Tithes, in order to enhance their value. And the author advances a variety of strong arguments in support of his position. (See *An Address to the Nobility and Gentry of the Church of Ireland, as by Law established, explaining the real causes of the Commotions and Insurrections in the Southern parts of this Kingdom, respecting Tithes*, &c. By Theophilus. *Originally published in* 1787, *and republished in* 1808.) The same sensible writer confutes the assertion of Mr. Grattan and others, that Tithes ought to be abolished, because they are a tax upon industry, since the more a Farmer tills and cultivates the earth, the greater quantity of Tithe is demandable from him. "This curious argument was first hatched by the sectaries in England, in the odious civil war which desolated the three kingdoms; but had so little weight, even with the fanatic rulers in that accursed period of our history, that Tithes continued to be paid throughout England, and were demanded and received by the ignorant rabble, who then usurped the pulpits, and ejected the orthodox clergy, even in the worst period of that illegal domination. But, let us examine how it can be maintained, that Tithes (even supposing them to be a tax) are more a tax on industry than all other taxes. The merchant who deals in the export or import trade, pays the more taxes, the more extensive his dealings are, and his taxes increase with his trade; how then are Tithes more a tax on the industry of the farmer than the duties payable by merchants on goods exported or imported are taxes on the industry of the merchant? The more extensive the dealings of a skilful merchant are, and the greater his industry, the more are his profits, and the more are his taxes: his industry renders him more able, and more willing, to pay the taxes; and he would smile at the absurdity of any person who would tell him, that he ought to be less industrious, because he would thereby diminish the taxes payable by him. In the same manner a farmer, the more industrious he is, and the more extensive his cultivation, pays the more Tithe, and is the more able to pay it: and it is a ridiculous argument, to prove a tax an impolitic one, to say it is a tax which is levied in an exact proportion with the abilities and means of the persons who are to pay it. It may, perhaps, be here objected, that this method of reasoning is fallacious, because, though the merchant pays the more taxes, the more extensive his dealings and his industry are, yet that he reimburses himself by fixing a proportionably higher price on his commodities, and thereby actually levies the tax paid by him on the consumer. But pray is not the case the same with the farmer? Does not the farmer sell the produce of his farm so much the dearer, as his rent, his Tithe, and his outgoings in the cultivation of his farm, are the greater and more expensive? If he does not so, he cannot long continue his business, he must be ruined. Does not the farmer, therefore, as well as the merchant, levy his tax of Tithes on the consumer."—Idem. P. 55, 56. This reasoning, in its *general* application, is perfectly sound; but an exception must be admitted, in cases where, in adjoining parishes, as is frequently the

Such discussions were not calculated to tranquillize the country, or to check the progress of insurrection. Some legislative measure, for that purpose, however, had become indispensable. And, at the very commencement of the session, the House of Commons, on the motion of the Attorney-General, had resolved, that some further provisions, by statute, were indispensably necessary to prevent tumultuous rising and assemblies, and, for the more adequate and effectual punishment of persons guilty of outrage, riot, and illegal combination, and of administering and taking unlawful oaths. Mr. Fitzgibbon afterwards brought in a bill, conformable to this resolution, which occasioned some warm debates, and was strongly opposed by the democratic party, on the usual ground, that the existing laws were fully adequate to the correction of the evil complained of, although the experience of every day proved their inefficacy. Mr. Grattan represented the bill as exceed-

case in England, the rate of Tithes varies considerably;—as, for instance, in one parish the Tithe may amount to four shillings per acre; whereas, in the next parish, it may amount to nine. In this case, if the farmer, in the last parish, attempt to make good the difference by raising the price of his produce, it is evident he will be defeated in his purpose, by his neighbours, who will be enabled to undersell him. But it is not on this narrow and contracted view of the subject, that the great question of Tithes is to be settled. Indeed, the author of the address is fully aware of this, and he, accordingly, establishes the right, expediency, and justice, of Tithes, on a broader and a truer basis. When Mr. Grattan asserted that the system of Tithes was *against the first principle of human existence*;* he was, probably, not aware, that Tithes were in existence under *the Jewish theocracy*.

There was one most serious evil which prevailed in Ireland at this time, which is still suffered to prevail, and which every effort of government should be exerted to remove;—the low and very inadequate price of labour. It was stated by Mr. Fitzgibbon, at the opening of this session, and afterwards by Mr. Grattan, that, while an Irish peasant paid from six to seven pounds for an acre of ground for the cultivation of potatoes, he worked out his rent at the rate only of five-pence or six-pence a day for his labour. Taking the highest rate of land and of labour, the peasant would thus be obliged to work for his landlord no less than two hundred and eighty days, or *more than three quarters of a year*, for the use of an acre of land for twelve months. This is a grievous oppression, which ought not to be tolerated in any country; and the man who would bring forward a bill for the regulation of wages in Ireland, so as to render them more proportionate to the price of land and of produce, would acquire much more solid claims to the character of a patriot, and to the gratitude of his countrymen, than could be conferred by any effort to abolish tithes, or to *emancipate* the Papists.

* See an account of this speech in Plowden's Historical Review. Vol. II, p. 165.

ing, in severity, the English riot act; and instanced, as a proof of his assertion, that "in England, the proclamation is obliged to be read; but, by this bill, nothing more was required of the magistrate than to command the rioters to disperse in the King's name. If they did not disperse in one hour, death was the consequence; and this he considered as putting an hour-glass in the hand of time, to run a race against the lives of the people; and this was certainly a great objection.* Here was an objection founded on a distinction without a difference; the only difference between the censured provision of the Irish act, and that of the English riot act (Stat. 1. Geo. 1, c. 5.) being that, in the former, the justices are required to *command* the rioters to disperse, in such language, and in such a way, as to them shall seem meet; whereas, in the latter, the form of command (for the magistrate is there also required to *command* the rioters to disperse) is given. What greater *severity* there can be, in the one case than the other,—it surpasses the sagacity of history to discover. In both cases, the penalty of non-compliance with the command, for one hour, is the same; every person remaining after that period, provided the number amounts to twelve, being made guilty of a capital offence. And it must be precisely the same thing, as far as "the hour-glass," and "the lives of the people," are concerned, whether the magistrate signifies his command in words of his own selection, or in words provided for him by an act of Parliament. But, as great stress appears to have been laid on the duty of reading *the proclamation* imposed on the English magistrate, it is probable that Mr. Grattan, either thought himself, or wished to make his audience think, that the perusal of the proclamation was a work of time, and would afford an opportunity to the rioters to disperse immediately, if they were so disposed; for, in no other point of view could the smallest importance be attached to the difference so strongly insisted on. The fact, however, is, that the proclamation is contained in five lines, and may be read or repeated in two minutes, or less.†—So

* *Plowden's Historical Review*, Vol. II, p. 160. Note.

† The proclamation is as follows:—"Our Sovereign Lord the King chargeth and commandeth all persons, being assembled, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the Act made in the first year of King *George* for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies.—God save the King."

that, in point of fact, there is no substantial difference between the provisions of the two acts, as far as respects the clause in question.

Mr. Orde, the Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, lamented, on this occasion, that any thing should have appeared in print, purporting that the insurrections had arisen from a Popish conspiracy, which he did not believe to be the case. He here alluded to an able pamphlet written by the learned, and truly pious, Doctor Woodward, Bishop of Cloyne, in which the origin and progress of the insurrection in Munster were traced, with a view to rouse the government to proper exertions of vigour, and to obtain the protection of the laws to the peaceable inhabitants, and loyal subjects, of Ireland. Mr. Curran, one of the leaders of the Democratic party, joined Mr. Orde in this lamentation, and treated as fabulous the imputed existence of a scheme formed by the Papists and Presbyterians for the subversion of the established religion and Constitution.* To these representations must be opposed not only the venerable Bishop of Cloyne, who had, at least, as good an opportunity as the Secretary of the Lord-Lieutenant, to ascertain the truth of the facts which he stated, but also the remarks of another able writer, from whose tract some quotations have been already made. "The Romish Clergy," he says, "in many places, openly acknowledge, that they are the authors of insurrections; for many of them have had the boldness, traitorously to read to their congregations, in their respective Mass-houses, the most rebellious manifestoes of the insurgents, pretending that they were compelled by threats so to do, though it is well known that the Popish laity are, in general, the slaves of their priests, and absolutely under their control; and their Mass-houses are the usual places where the insurgents meet, and bind themselves by oaths to execute their rebellious and barbarous designs, to give their confederacy the greater strength and duration when cemented, and, as it were, consolidated by an oath, made at the feet of their altars."†

This measure of police being carried with a high hand, and the Lord

* Plowden's Historical Review, Vol. II, p. 162.—*Note.*

† Address to the Nobility and Gentry, &c. by Philalethes, p. 71, 72.

Lieutenant continuing to observe the most rigid frugality, in the expenditure of the public money, nothing remained on which discontented patriotism could expatiate with energy or effect. To such extremes, indeed, were the Democratic party driven, and so scanty was their supply of grounds for declamation, that they even condescended to accept, as a theme on which to exercise their talents, an act of *extravagance,* on the part of the Secretary to the Viceroy, who had expended the sum of *fifteen pounds* on the enclosure of a scrap of ground in the Phœnix Park. To make amends, however, for this extraordinary deviation from his usual system of economy, and to supply the deficit occasioned thereby in the Vice-Regal Treasury, the Lord Lieutenant ordered all the old pictures and useless furniture, at the Castle, to be sold by auction, for the benefit of the public;—nay, he even went so far, as to cause the arsenal and ordnance stores to be rummaged, and all the defective arms to be disposed of in the same way; to the great advantage of the numerous gangs of robbers and disturbers of the peace, who thus provided themselves, at a cheap rate, with the means of future depredations.

The conduct of the Democratic party, at the awful period of the King's illness, has been fully detailed in the account of the discussions and proceedings, in both countries, on that occasion. Immediately after his Majesty's recovery, Mr. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney-General, whose steady loyalty formed a striking contrast to the selfish policy of many of his colleagues, was created Earl of Clare, and made Chancellor of Ireland.

Mean while the internal tranquillity of Ireland was partially disturbed, by numerous gangs of depredators, in several of the provinces, known by the appellations of *White Boys* and *Defenders,* the former being *Presbyterians* and the latter *Papists.* The origin of these riotous gangs of miscreants has been ascribed to an accidental quarrel between two Presbyterians, in the Summer of 1784, when a fight ensued, in which the advice of two by-standers, of the Romish persuasion, was of great service to the party who beat the other. The vanquished vowed revenge, and several battles ensued, in the course of that, and the succeeding,

year, but without any distinction of Papist and Presbyterian, neighbours of both persuasions fighting under the same banner. At length, however, the animosity which has ever prevailed between the two descriptions of religionists produced a separation, and gave to their irregular proceedings the cast and character of a religious feud. The Romanists having betrayed a great anxiety to collect all the arms which they could possibly procure, the Presbyterians resolved to disarm them; and, at this period, the former assumed the appellation of *Defenders*, and the latter that of *Peep o'Day Boys*, from the circumstance of their visits to the houses of the Papists, at day-break, for the purpose of searching for arms. During these visits, the most lawless outrages were committed on the Papists; and the passions of both parties became, in a short time, so much inflamed, that resentment silenced the voice of reason; and revenge stifled the admonitions of conscience.

Had the gentlemen of the country used but common efforts for quelling the prevalent disposition to riot and tumult, there is no doubt that tranquillity and order might have been easily restored. But, far from exerting their influence for so salutary a purpose, they rather encouraged than soothed the violence of the contending parties, and, for the low object of electioneering interest, adopted either one side or the other, thus sacrificing the public peace to private considerations. They even interfered to pervert the course of justice, and, in 1785, when some Presbyterians were convicted of a barbarous assault on a Romanist, a neighbouring gentleman interposed between the culprits and the law, and rescued them from the punishment which they were sentenced to undergo. On the other hand, two years after, a Papist, having been sentenced to die at Armagh, for the murder of a Presbyterian, another individual exerted his interest, and procured his pardon.

Hitherto, the members of the Established Church had taken no part in this dispute; but the public peace was so far interrupted by it, in the year 1788, that companies of volunteers were formed for the avowed purpose of suppressing all tumultuous meetings, and of enforcing obedience to the civil power. These volunteers were, in various instances, attacked by the defenders, who soon became a regular armed association,

bound to each other, and to the common cause, by the solemn obligation of an oath, and possessed of abundance of arms. It is remarkable, that the form of their oath contained a qualified promise of obedience to the King, "*while we live under the same government*;"* and, from the observation of a noted defender, who was executed for treason, in 1795,—"*If the King's head were off to-morrow, you would not be under the same government*," it has been, reasonably, inferred, that they had combined for treasonable purposes.† And it has also been concluded, from what passed at the trial of other defenders, that their principal object was the extirpation of Protestants. ‡

Whatever may be the justice and validity of this conclusion, a fact has been adduced in support of it, which establishes, beyond a doubt, the inveterate malignity, and ferocious spirit, of the lower class of Romanists, in the county of Armagh. A gentleman of Forkhill, in that county, died at the beginning of 1787, and left an estate of about four thousand a year, which he directed to be appropriated to the charitable purposes of peopleing his demesne, which covered a tract of three thousand acres of land, with Protestants; and of endowing on it four schools, at which children of every religious persuasion should receive a gratuitous education. Two years after his death, his trustees obtained an Act of Parliament for carrying the provisions of his will into effect; and they appointed the Rector of Forkhill, Mr. Hudson, who was himself a trustee, the acting Agent in the business. The neighbouring Papists, however, avowed their resolution to prevent the execution of every part of this benevolent plan. They twice attempted to murder Mr. Hudson, by firing at him. On one occasion, a villain went from a Popish chapel, while the congregation was assembled, to the side of the road by which Mr. Hudson was passing, and deliberately levelled a musket at him from behind a bush, and killed his horse. The new Colonists were hunted like wild beasts; their houses were demolished; and their property was destroyed. The miscreants openly triumphed in

* See the form of this oath in the Appendix (No. 11.) to Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs.

† Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, 4to. p. 58. ‡ Idem Ibid.

their enormities; and, while they were transgressing both divine and human laws, in a manner which called for exemplary punishment, they seemed to think they were performing meritorious deeds, deserving of commendation and reward. They burnt the Manor-mill, and would have murdered the miller, but he fortunately effected his escape, naked; and, by fording the river in the night, preserved his life.

Early in 1791, these ferocious fanatics resolved to destroy Alexander Barclay, one of the Schoolmasters at Forkhill. An account of the horrid transaction was transmitted to the Bishop of Dromore, by three of the Trustees, with the following letter:

"*Forkhill Lodge, 1st February*, 1791.

"My Lord,

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, having assembled at Forkhill, pursuant to Act of Parliament, to superintend the execution of the charities of the late Mr. Jackson, are much concerned to acquaint your Lordship, that a most horrid outrage was committed on Friday last, on the person of one Barclay, one of the schoolmasters appointed by us in this parish, (the particulars of which we enclose to your Lordship) in consequence of which we think it absolutely necessary to suspend all operations of the charity, until the opinion of a general board can be had, which we request your Lordship will summon with all convenient speed, and take such farther steps as the circumstances may require. We beg leave to remind your Lordship, that, at the last general board, it was unanimously resolved, that the establishment of a barrack, for a company of foot, would be of general utility, and that your Lordship agreed to recommend it to the Lord-Lieutenant. The late event shews the expediency of such an establishment; and we greatly fear, if some means are not immediately used to restore the peace of the county, the objects of the charity can never be fulfilled.

"Percy Jocelyn,
"Richard Allott,
"E. Hudson."

"On Friday evening, at seven o'clock, a number of villains assem-

bled at the house of Barclay, one of the schoolmasters in the parish of Forkhill, near Dundalk, appointed by the trustees of the late Richard Jackson's charities, to instruct, indiscriminately, the children of the poor of the said parish. They rapped at the door; he enquired who was there, and one man, of the name of Terence Byrne, his near neighbour, (whose voice he well knew, and whom he had before, at different times, admitted upon knowing it) told him he was there; he opened the door, and a number of men rushed in, threw him on his face, and stabbed him repeatedly.—They then put a cord round his neck, which they tightened so as to force out his tongue; part of which, as far as they could reach, they cut off.—They then cut off the four fingers and thumb of his right hand, and left him on the floor, and proceeded to use his wife in the same manner. To add to their barbarity, they cut out her tongue, and cut off her four fingers and thumb, with a blunt weapon, which operation took up above ten minutes, one or two of them holding up her arm, while they committed this inhuman action. They then battered and beat her in a dreadful manner. Her brother, a boy of thirteen years of age, had come from Armagh that morning to see her. They cut out his tongue, and cut off the calf of his leg, and left them all three in that situation.

" No reason can be assigned for this most inhuman transaction. The man was a Protestant, a peaceable, decent man; he taught above thirty of their children *gratis*, being allowed a salary by the trustees for forty more. He asked them, whether he had ever offended them? They said not; but that was the beginning of what he, and those like him, * should suffer.

" Shocking as this account is to human nature, *it is publicly exulted at in the Parish; and no person seems to think that any punishment will follow the commission of this most atrocious wickedness. So far were they from wishing to conceal it, that they proceeded on the road with torches, publicly, and in defiance of every body.*

Meaning Protestants."

"There is every reason to dread the most alarming consequences from the effects of this transaction. The Protestants are every way in the greatest terror, and, unless government affords them assistance, must leave the country; as this recent instance of inhumanity, and the threatenings thrown out against them, leave no doubt upon their minds of what the intentions must be against them.

"The man and the boy can speak a little;—the woman* cannot; and, fortunately, they are all likely to die; as, if they live, they are incapable of earning their subsistence. Terence Byrne is since fled." †

One of the villains concerned in the horrid transaction was admitted as an evidence against one of his associates, Murphy, in whose house Barclay's watch was found.—And, his person being fully identified, he was doomed to suffer the sentence of the law. In his way to Forkhill, which, having been the scene of his crime, was, with great propriety, destined to be the scene of his punishment, he is said to have exhibited the strongest symptoms of fear, contrition, and despondency.—But when he approached the place of his execution, he was met by a Romish priest, who whispered, a short time, in his ear; his countenance brightened up, he advanced with firmness to the fatal spot, and met his fate with cheerfulness and resignation. ‡

This fact, which is established beyond the possibility of doubt, clearly demonstrates the ferocious spirit of the lower classes of Romanists, in that part of the country in which it occurred: and exhibits a strong proof of the justice of the charge which has been preferred against them, that the extirpation of the Protestant religion, and of its followers, was the principal object of their tumultuous assemblies. In this instance, their cruelty was greatly aggravated by their base ingratitude; for the man whom they murdered had never afforded them any ground

* "She was a handsome young woman; they cut off one of her breasts, and she soon after died.

† Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs 4to. p. 61, 62.

‡ Idem p. 62.

of offence; on the contrary, he had been the instrument, in the hands of others, of conferring benefits on them, by the gratuitous instruction of their children.—But these wretched fanatics would not, it seems, be satisfied with favours conferred on themselves, if participated with Protestants. There was no *political* pretext to stimulate them to the commission of this deed.—On this occasion, neither *Tithes*, nor *Parliamentary Reform*, nor any other of the false and frivolous pretences, which the factious advocates of the Papists have urged in extenuation of their crimes, were, or could be, brought forward. The atrocious murder of an innocent family was the mere effect of Popish fanaticism operating upon ignorance. But these men had priests, who had a complete ascendancy over their minds, and whose duty it was to instil into them sentiments of Christian charity; to correct their evil propensities; to temper the savage virulence of their rude and boisterous passions; to humanize their souls, and to make them social beings. They do not, however, appear to have exerted their boundless influence for any such beneficial purposes; the determination to frustrate the benevolent designs of the pious Christian who had devoted his fortune to the good and welfare of his fellow creatures, was publicly known; and it is impossible, therefore, to suppose, that the priests could be ignorant of it. Yet was no effort made to prevent it; and a deed was suffered to be openly perpetrated, which, for dark malignity of design, and for deliberate cruelty of execution, is to be equalled only by the sanguinary exploits of revolutionary France.

The continued collection of arms, by the Romanists, at length attracted the notice of the legal authorities of the country. The Grand Jury, and High Sheriff, of the county of Armagh, at the Assizes in the Spring of 1791, came to the following resolution:—"That a rage among the Roman Catholics for illegally arming themselves has of late taken place, and is truly alarming. In order, then, to put a stop to such proceedings, and to restore tranquillity, we do pledge ourselves to each other, as Magistrates and individuals; and do hereby offer a reward of five guineas for the conviction of each of the first twenty persons, illegally armed and assembled as aforesaid." *

* Musgrave's Memoirs, ubi suprà.

The revolution in France had, at this period, begun to display some of the natural effects of the principles on which it was founded. And, as the Catholic powers of the Continent had always been considered, by the disaffected part of the Irish nation, as their natural allies, they now looked to the French for assistance and support. And it is certain that the Defenders had resolved to effect a revolution in Ireland, on French principles, which should produce the separation of that country from the Crown of Great Britain, and establish the Catholic ascendancy on the ruins of the Protestant Church.

As the press had been found greatly instrumental in subverting the ancient institutions of the Gallic Monarchy, recourse was eagerly had to it for producing similar effects in Ireland. The most inflammatory publications were, accordingly, circulated through the greater part of the kingdom; and every symptom of an approaching revolution was visible at an early part of the year 1791. Meantime the Catholic Committee, which sate regularly at Dublin, had resolved to petition the Legislature for a repeal of the restrictive statutes which had been passed for the security of the established Church. An address was drawn up, in a spirit of mildness and moderation, highly becoming the nature of such an application. It was signed by the Lords Fingal, Gormanstown, and Kenmare, by the Popish Primate, Dr. Troy, and by most of the gentlemen of respectability and property, of the Romish persuasion.

This Address was presented to the Lord Lieutenant, at the close of the year 1791.—But so little did the mild spirit which it breathed accord with the present feelings of the Papists, that their general Committee assembled, in Dublin, on the sixth of January, and published resolutions condemning the Address, and represented it as having been surreptitiously obtained; and as not expressing the real sense of the Catholic body. And they resolved to request the Viceroy to state to his Majesty their reasons for withdrawing their names from that Address. They declared that Lord Kenmare had entirely forfeited their confidence, by his late conduct, in procuring, by his own exertions, and by those of his emissaries, certain servile and insidious addresses, calculated to divide the Catholics of Ireland, and eventually to defeat their just appli-

cations for relief from the grievous oppressions under which they laboured. They also struck his name out of the list of their sub-committee.*

At the same time parochial meetings were held in different parts of the kingdom, at which addresses of thanks were voted to the General Committee, and strong censures were passed on the Lords Fingal and Kenmare, and their expulsion from the Catholic Committee recommended. A schism in this body immediately ensued; the most turbulent members forming a new association, under the name of the Catholic Society. This society avowed their object to be a total repeal of all the restrictive laws against Papists; and they invited their fellow-sufferers, throughout the kingdom, to unite with them for its accomplishment; insisting that it was the interest of every man in Ireland to promote the abolition of the whole code. Till the commencement of 1792, Lords Fingal, and Kenmare, and Sir Patrick Bellew were at the head of the Committee, but, about that time, they became so disgusted and alarmed at the intemperance of their proceedings, that they left them, with about sixty of the most respectable of the Roman Catholic gentry. Lord Fingal had been voted out of the chair of the Committee, in rather a tumultuous manner, and Thomas Braughall was voted into it; and it has been said, that his Lordship became so sensible of the evil designs of these turbulent patriots, that he, soon after this event, declared, that he should be very sorry to see the members of his Church put on an equal footing with those of the established religion.† Doctor M'Kenna, too, a Catholic writer, thus admonished the Committee for the impro-

* Lord Kenmare had incurred the resentment of the turbulent and factious spirits which took the lead at this meeting, by his conduct, in presenting a Loyal Address in the name of the Roman Catholics of the county of Kerry, expressive of their concern at the appearance of certain inflammatory writings, and at the attempt to form associations, calculated to sow the seeds of discontent among the lower classes of Romanists.—*Musgrave's Memoirs p.* 78.

† Idem Ibid. I once heard a very intelligent English Catholic Priest declare, that, if there must be an established religion in the country, he would rather it should be the Protestant religion than any other, from a conviction that its spirit was more tolerant than that of any other religion. Indeed, the history of almost every country in Europe will convince any impartial man of the reality of this fact.

priety of their conduct,—"If ever there should arise among us a ridiculous cabal of men, ambitious of rule, without abilities to regulate, who, actuated by vanity and jealousy, will endeavour to estrange from our cause the men of rank, and disgust its natural leaders, and discountenance men of letters, its natural auxiliaries; such persons may mean well, but their good intentions will only retard, not avert, what they well deserve, the execration of the body, whose opinions they caricature, and whose interest they injure. I am obliged reluctantly to express, (what the entire nation must perceive) that the few gentlemen of the metropolis, the sub-committee of Catholics, who have hitherto assumed the direction of business,* stand in need of coadjutors. I question their prudence, not their zeal, not their intentions; but their reflection, foresight, and political sagacity. It is time the cause of a great people should assume the appearance of system. For the last ten months it has fluctuated before the public, in the hands of unskilful managers, without even the dignity of steadiness, advancing and retreating, asserting and retracting, with the giddiness of school-boys, and the random of a game of nine pins."

It was at this time, that the proceedings of the Romanists so far disgusted even their warmest and best advocates, that Sir Hercules Langrishe, who had uniformly displayed the most friendly disposition towards them, thus expressed himself in Parliament, (in January, 1792) "Notwithstanding my prepossessions in favour of the Roman Catholics, I was checked for some time, in my ardour to serve them, by reading, of late, a multitude of publications and paragraphs in the newspapers, and other public prints, circulated, *gratis*, with the utmost industry, purporting to convey the sentiments of the Catholics. What was their import? They were exhortations to the people never to be satisfied with any concession, till the State itself was conceded;—they were precautions against public tranquillity; they were invitations to disorder, and covenants of discontent; they were ostentations of

* The Committee were, at this time, under the special guidance of Edward Byrne, John Keogh, Randall M'Donnell, Thomas Braughall, John Sweetman, and Richard M'Cormick. The two last, and Theobald Wolfe Tone, (all of whom proved to be notorious traitors) were Secretaries to the Committee.

strength, rather than solicitations for favours; rather appeals to the powers of the people, than applications to the authority of the State; they involved the relief of the Catholic with the revolution of the government; and were dissertations for democracy, rather than arguments for toleration."

But, intemperate as the Committee were, they did not yet venture directly to prefer those extravagant pretensions which, at a subsequent period, they advanced. They now limited their claims to—admission to the profession and practice of the law;—capacity to serve as county magistrates;—a right to be summoned, and to serve on grand and petty juries;—and a right of voting, in counties only, for Protestant members of Parliament, but with a provision that a Roman Catholic freeholder should not vote, unless he either rented or cultivated a farm of twenty pounds a year, in addition to his freehold of forty shillings; or that he should be possessed of a freehold of twenty pounds a year. These they published as the extent of their claims, in order to remove all false impressions on the subject, and to counteract the efforts of their enemies, who, in order to injure their cause, had asserted, that their expectations were greater. A petition, conformable to the pretensions thus avowed, was presented to the Irish House of Commons, in the month of February, 1792; but it was conceived in terms so disrespectful and indecorous, that the member who presented it (Mr. O'Hara) requested leave to withdraw it. Another petition was afterwards framed by the Committee, and presented to the House, but it was rejected by the decisive majority of 202 to 25.

On this occasion the Corporation of Dublin, the members of which had ever been distinguished for their steady attachment to the Established Church, and for unshaken loyalty to their Sovereign, voted their thanks to the majority of their representatives, for rejecting the Catholic petition for admission to the elective franchise. Nine days after, the Catholic Society held a meeting, at which they condemned the resolutions of the Corporation, and returned thanks to the five and twenty members who had supported their claims. The example of these two bodies was followed in many parts of the kingdom, by the grand juries, and by the

principal inhabitants of different counties and of towns; the Protestants voting thanks to the Majority in Parliament, and declaring their determination to maintain the Constitution as it then stood; and the Catholics thanking the Minority, and expressing their resolution to persist in the assertion of their claims. Parochial meetings, too, were holden in several places, where the lowest orders of Catholics met, discussed their rights, censured the conduct of the Grand Juries, and applauded that of their delegates in the Catholic Committee; by which means great discontent, and general dissatisfaction, were spread among the people, and the passions of the multitude became irritated and inflamed.

But though the Parliament had rejected, as dangerous to a Protestant State, the claims which the Romanists had preferred to the elective franchise, by obtaining which they would have acquired a considerable degree of political influence, it wisely resolved to remove those odious incapacities, which nothing but an imperious necessity could, at any time, have justified, and which deprived them of the ability to settle in life, in a manner most agreeable to their inclinations. It was accordingly enacted, that, after the twenty-fourth of June, 1792, they might practice as attornies and barristers; that Protestants and Papists might intermarry; and that Popish schoolmasters need not obtain licences from the ordinary to keep schools;—all restrictions respecting their education in foreign countries were likewise removed at the same time. These concessions, however, were received with a very ill grace, by the great mass of Papists; and their Committee, being loosed from the restraints which the presence of the principal nobility and gentry of their persuasion imposed, resolved to be satisfied with nothing less than an equal participation of political power with the Protestants, without submitting to those conditions on which alone a Protestant is enabled to enjoy it. The means by which they should accomplish their end was perfectly indifferent to them. They endeavoured to intimidate the government, by putting the great mass of the people in motion; and Edward Byrne was ordered to issue writs to every county, and to many of the towns and districts, desiring certain persons to hold elections, and to choose representatives, to be returned forthwith to Dublin, for the purpose of form-

ing a Convention. These writs directed that the elections should be carried on in the same manner, and on the same plan, which had been adopted in France, for the election of the National Assembly. * So well were the Irish Romanists prepared previous to this election, that these writs were executed throughout the nation; a Romish Convention met, in consequence, on the third of December, 1792, at Tailor's-Hall, in Back-Lane, Dublin, whence they received the denomination of the *Back-Lane Parliament.* This Convention drew up one of the most false and acrimonious libels against the Protestant government of the country that could possibly be devised, styled it a petition to his Majesty, and caused it to be presented as such by five of their delegates;—Sir Thomas French, Christopher Bellew, James E. Devereux, Edward Byrne, and John Keogh, Esquires. Lord Westmoreland, who was then Viceroy, did not think it fit to disperse this assembly, which had been convened, as it were, by an assumption of Sovereign power, which constituted a kind of *imperium in imperio,* and which, notwithstanding the opinions in favour of its legality by two barristers, (Mr. Simon Butler, and Mr. Beresford Burston †) must be condemned as unconstitutional by every man who has paid any attention to the true principles of the Constitution. It, accordingly, continued sitting, with closed doors, in the very seat of government, for a considerable length of time, "to the great reproach of those who were then entrusted with the regulation of the police of the country;" ‡ and when, at length, the members of it thought fit to close their sitting, they appointed a permanent Committee, whom they styled *The Committee of the Catholics of Ireland,* consisting of nine persons, who had been most active amongst them; three of whom, M'Nevin, Braughall, and Sweetman, were afterwards apprehended on charges of high treason, while their Secretary, M'Cormick, who was accused of the same crime, escaped punishment by flight.

* Dr. Duigenan's Answer to Mr. Grattan's Address, p. 16.

† Plowden's Historical Review, p. 383.

‡ Duigenan's Answer to Grattan, p. 1.

While the Romanists were thus labouring to accomplish their grand object, the Protestants of Ireland were by no means passive spectators of the threatening storm. The Grand Juries, throughout the country, took the alarm, and drew up very strong addresses, at the Summer assizes, which were presented to the Viceroy, expressive of their resolution to defend the established religion of their country against every attempt at innovation, and deprecating the grant of the elective franchise to the Papists, as highly dangerous to the Constitution. * Foremost amongst the loyal Protestants of Ireland, stood the Corporation of Dublin, which assembled on the eleventh of September, 1792, for the purpose of taking into consideration Edward Byrne's letter, for assembling the *Back-Lane Parliament*, and the plan proposed for obtaining farther indulgence for the Papists, from the Legislature. At this meeting, it was unanimously resolved to address the following letter to the Protestants of Ireland:

"COUNTRYMEN AND FRIENDS!

"The firm and manly support which we received from you when you stood forward in defence of the Protestant Ascendancy, deserves our warmest thanks; we hoped that the sense of the Protestants of Ireland, declared upon that occasion, would have convinced our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, that the pursuit of political power was, for them, a vain pursuit; for, though the liberal and enlightened mind of the Protestant receives pleasure in seeing the Catholic exercise his religion with freedom—enjoy his property in security—and possess the highest degree of personal liberty, yet experience has taught us, that, without the ruin of the Protestant Establishment the Catholic cannot be allowed the smallest influence in the State.

"For more than ten years the press has teemed with various writings, intended to prove the Roman Catholics have an equal claim with Pro-

* Some of these addresses may be seen in Mr. Plowden's Work, Vol. II. p. p. 74, 75. They certainly spoke the sentiments of the members of the Established Church, although Mr. Plowden, with an equal contempt of decency and of truth, insinuates that the *juries* were *packed*.

testants to a participation in the exercise of political power in this kingdom; that such a participation would not be injurious to Protestants; that prejudice, only, prevents Protestants from conceding this claim; and, to complete the work, a letter has lately appeared, signed '*Edward Byrne*,' in which the Roman Catholics are instructed to proceed upon the plan of the French democracy, to elect a representation of their own, to which said Byrne insinuates that "the Protestants *must* bend, as he has assurance from the highest authority.'

"In answer to these charges, and these claims, we shall, in a few lines, briefly state the case of the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Ireland; in doing which we shall not endeavour to add to our language any other ornament than the beautiful simplicity of truth.

"One hundred years are just elapsed since the question was tried upon an appeal to Heaven,—whether this country should become a Popish kingdom, governed by an arbitrary and unconstitutional Popish tyrant, and dependant upon France, or enjoy the blessings of a free Protestant Government—a Protestant Monarchy, limited by the Constitution,—and an intimate connection with the free Empire of Britain. The Great Ruler of all things decided in favour of our ancestors; he gave them victory, and Ireland became a Protestant Nation, enjoying a British Constitution.

"But the conflict had been neither short nor trivial; and so many and so great were the efforts made by the Roman Catholics in support of their Popish King and French connections, that our ancestors were obliged, in their own defence, to deprive them of all political power, which they did by severe, but necessary, restrictive laws.

"Time draws the veil of oblivion over the virtues as well as the faults of men: In the lapse of more than fourscore years, the causes which induced the necessity of these laws were almost forgotten; while the generous Protestant saw, with pain, his Roman Catholic fellow-subject labouring under restrictions which, from his peaceable demeanour then,

appeared no longer necessary; and he could scarcely refrain from charging his ancestors with too much severity. Session after Session the restrictive laws were rapidly repealed, and the last Session of Parliament left the Roman Catholics in no wise different from their Protestant fellow-subjects—*save only in the exercise of political power.*

" But be it remembered, that from the moment the Protestant began to make concessions, the Roman Catholic began to extend his claims; at first a very little would have satisfied him—that little and much more was granted; more still was claimed; and when every thing, consistent with Protestant safety, was conceded, instead of grateful acknowledgments and declarations of satisfaction, our ears have been dinned with exclamations of discontent, the ravings of political clubs, and the declamations of state reformers.

" But, we hope that the great body of the Roman Catholics are yet free from the influence of that dangerous spirit which has pervaded the clubs in this city: We hope they will reject Mr. BYRNE's counsel, and be grateful for the indulgences they at ive received from Protestants. To delude them from their tranquillity, they are told by Byrne, that he has ' the first authority for asserting this application will have infinite weight ' with our Gracious Sovereign, and with Parliament, if our friends are ' qualified to declare, that it is the universal wish of every Catholic in the ' Nation.'—But we trust it is unfounded: were it otherwise, we tell that the Protestants of Ireland would not be compelled, by any authority whatever, to abandon that Political situation which their forefathers won with their swords, and which is, therefore, their birthright; or to surrender their religion at the foot-stool of Popery.

" Every Irish Protestant has an interest in the government of this kingdom; he is born a member of the state, and with a capacity of filling its offices;—this capacity he derives from that Constitution, which his ancestors acquired when they overthrew the Popish tyrant—it is guaranteed by that Constitution—it is secured by the Law—he is in possession of it, and we know of no power under Heaven, authorised to alienate this, our most valuable, inheritance.

"Having thus, Countrymen and Friends, spoken to you our sentiments in the undisguised language of truth, we shall intreat you to join with us in using every honest means of persuading the Roman Catholics to rest content with

"The most perfect toleration of their religion,

"The fullest security of their property—and

"The most complete personal liberty—

but by no means now, or hereafter, to attempt any interference in the government of the kingdom, as such interference would be incompatible with the Protestant Ascendancy, which we have resolved *with our lives and fortunes to maintain.*

"And, that no doubt may remain of what we understand by the words 'Protestant Ascendancy,' we have further

"Resolved, That we consider the Protestant Ascendancy to consist in

"A PROTESTANT KING OF IRELAND,

"A PROTESTANT PARLIAMENT,

"A PROTESTANT HIERARCHY,

"PROTESTANT ELECTORS AND GOVERNMENT,

"THE BENCHES OF JUSTICE,

"THE ARMY AND THE REVENUE,

"THROUGH ALL THEIR BRANCHES AND DETAILS,

PROTESTANT;

"AND THIS SYSTEM SUPPORTED BY A CONNECTION WITH THE PROTESTANT REALM OF BRITAIN."

This spirited Address was sent to every Corporation in the kingdom, to every Magistrate, and to every Member of Parliament.—The Government expressed their satisfaction at this manifestation of loyalty, and this promise of support, and avowed their determination never to admit the Romanists to any participation of political power in the State.*—Such was the unanimity which prevailed among the Protestants, and

* Musgrave's Memoirs, 4to. p. 85.

such the firmness avowed by the government, who cordially concurred in their sentiments, that the point was considered as settled; and as subject to no future difference or dispute. The Papists now enjoyed, in Ireland, a full and perfect toleration, as far as respected religious worship, and much greater indulgence than ever Protestants had enjoyed in any country in which the religion of Rome was the established religion of the State. But a circumstance occurred, at this critical period, which produced a total change, if not in the *sentiments*, at least in the *conduct*, of the Irish government.

Mr. Burke, by his masterly writings on the French Revolution, and still more by the manly and decided part which he had taken in Parliament against the adoption of those destructive principles on which that revolution was founded, now stood deservedly high in the esteem and confidence of Mr. Pitt.

Without entering into an unnecessary investigation of the cause which produced, in Mr. Burke's mind, a strong predilection in favour of the Papists, it is sufficient to state, that it certainly existed, and had a material influence on the advice which he gave to the Ministers on the important subject of Irish politics. So perfectly aware were the Irish Papists of this circumstance, that they made Mr. Burke's son their Secretary, for the *avowed* purpose of securing the advice, assistance, and support, of his father.*

* "In order," says Mr. Plowden, speaking of the Catholics, he being a Catholic himself, "to purge themselves in the eyes of government, of any sort of levelling democracy, which was so peculiarly obnoxious to Government;" (and to every friend of social order, he might have added,) "the Catholic Committee chose for their council and agent the son of Mr. Burke, conceiving that he would give no advice, concur in no measure, abet no step, *without the privity, direction, and approbation of his father.*" "It appears to have been understood between the British and Irish Cabinets, that the opinions and countenance of Mr. Burke, at this period the triumphant and unrivalled champion of Church and State throughout Great Britain, should be permitted to have currency and support, also, through the kingdom of Ireland."

The character which Mr. Plowden, for obvious reasons, assigns to Mr. Burke's letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, written, as he says, for the purpose of obviating any objection to *Catholic Emancipation*, and for demonstrating its compatibility with the Coronation-Oath, might easily

The war with France had now begun, and Mr. Pitt was naturally anxious to unite every heart, and every arm, in his Majesty's dominions, in one grand effort against the common enemy. And Mr. Burke, unfortunately, succeeded in persuading him, that a repeal of the restrictive laws in force against the Papists would immediately produce that desirable effect. Instructions were, accordingly, sent over to the Viceroy, conformable to the resolution founded on this persuasion. And, utterly regardless of that consistency of character and of conduct, without which no Government can expect to secure either confidence or respect, the Irish Cabinet, whose adverse opinions had been too strongly and too recently declared to admit of a doubt; and the Irish Parliament, who had loudly, indignantly, and resolutely, rejected, but a few months before, an application for the same purpose,—and rejected it, not on the pretext that it was ill timed, but on broad and general principles, now consented to become the instruments for carrying the determination of the British Cabinet into effect.

To Mr. Hobart (now Earl of Buckinghamshire), who was Secretary to the Viceroy, the awkward task of calling upon the Parliament to belie all their former sentiments, to violate all their recorded principles, and to act in direct contradiction to their lately-avowed resolutions, was assigned. He introduced the subject to the House, on the 4th of February, 1793, by acknowledging, that he was aware the measure which he had to propose would be disapproved by many of the gentlemen whom he most respected; and that he was also aware that the very measure had, in the last session, been rejected by the House, and that he had himself voted for its rejection;—but he asserted that a material change had taken place in the sentiments of the country, since that time;—the country were not then ripe for such a measure; but the circumstances of the present day would justify a very material alteration in the sentiments

be proved to be any thing but correct and just. The letter is, certainly, written with great ability, as was every production of Mr. Burke's pen; but it would be no very difficult task to shew the fallacy of his reasoning, the invalidity of his conclusions, and the incompatibility of certain positions there advanced, with others brought forward in his admirable reflections on the French Revolution.

of the House. The conduct of the Roman Catholics had proved that they were perfectly attached to the constitution, and, at such a crisis, every man, who was attached to the constitution, should receive encouragement from the House.* On what basis Mr. Hobart founded these bold and extraordinary assertions, it would surpass the ordinary sagacity of human nature to discover. So far from any change having taken place in the minds of the Protestants of Ireland, it has been shewn, that, at the very last assizes, they had declared their almost unanimous opinions, through the medium of the Grand Juries, of the destructive tendency of those very measures which the Secretary now proposed to adopt, and their fixed resolution to oppose their adoption by every legal means. The conduct of the Catholics, too, had proved any thing but their attachment to the constitution. That the principal nobility and gentry of that persuasion, who formed a very inconsiderable part of the Catholic body, were, (most of them at least) men of high respectability, incapable of entering into any scheme for the subversion of the government, it would be equally foolish and unjust to deny. But *their* principles, and *their* conduct, had undergone no alteration; they were the same, when their former petition was rejected, as they were at this moment. If it were meant, therefore, that *their* attachment to the constitution justified the change in the measures of the Cabinet, it was evident, that the pretext was wholly destitute of foundation; since the Cabinet must have been equally convinced of that attachment when they refused to listen to their supplications, in the preceding session. The *defenders* were Catholics, and to talk of *their* attachment to the constitution was to insult the common sense of the House, and of the public. What there was in the conduct of the *Catholic Committee*, who had assumed regal power, by issuing writs for assembling a Catholic Parliament in the capital, to justify the eulogy pronounced by the Secretary, it were vain to conjecture.—Could Mr. Hobart, at this time, be ignorant of the facts which were, soon after, established by the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, instituted for the purpose of investigating the origin and causes of the spirit of treason and disaffection, which the defenders manifested in various parts of the kingdom, in order that salutary measures might be

* Plowden's Historical Review, Vol. II. p. 407.

adopted to check its progress? In the course of this inquiry it was proved, that John Sweetman, Secretary to the Catholic Committee in Dublin, wrote to an opulent Romanist of Dundalk, whose name was Coleman, on the subject of the defenders, many of whom were then imprisoned in that town; that, in one of his letters, dated August the 9th, 1792, Sweetman, in the name of the Catholic Committee, directed inquiries to be made, touching the offences of which the culprits were accused;—that the Catholic Committee interested themselves warmly for the defenders,—and that Coleman employed, at a considerable expence, an agent and counsel to act for several persons, then imprisoned on a charge of being defenders.*

A pamphlet, published, in the year 1792, by one of the most intelligent and efficient members of the Catholic body, † whose writings materially served the cause, because he assumed, at least, the appearance of moderation on most occasions, contained the following threat to the Protestant State:—"Will the Presbyterian Yeomanry of the North take up arms for the courtiers who enjoy pensions, for the persons who exact tithes, and for the landlords who exact rack-rents? They, too, are complainants; and if they unsheath the sword against their brethren, (meaning the Protestants of the Established Church) will they be likely to return it to the scabbard, until they have procured very ample redress, and removed every cause of their complaints? Should that people ever be embodied, tithes, boroughs, and all the arts and practices of monopoly will inevitably fall before them."

Proofs of disaffection, at this period, may be found in abundance; but proofs of general attachment to the constitution appear to have been confined to Mr. Hobart's speech. That gentleman declared the purport of his bill to be, to restore the elective franchise to the Papists, to enable them to vote in cities, and towns corporate, for magistrates; to render them capable of being jurors and magistrates; to enable them to endow

* See the Report of the Secret Committee of the Lords, in 1793.

† Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 97.

a College, or University; and schools; and to hold commissions in the army and navy. Two only of the Irish members opposed the motion for bringing in this bill, Dr. Duigenan and Mr. Ogle. The former of these members proposed to add to the oath of allegiance, inserted in the bill, the following clause:—" Nor do we believe, that any other sect of Christians are, of course, to be doomed to eternal damnation hereafter, and that they may not enter into a state of salvation because they may happen to differ from us in religious tenets." But all their ecclesiastics, and the leading members of the laity, concurred in declaring, that the fundamental principles of their religion rendered such an oath inadmissible. *

The bill was read a second time, on the 22d of February, when Mr. George Ponsonby, and M. de La Touche, spoke against it, but only one member *voted* against it. Indeed, the members seemed to vie with each other in their efforts to prove their servility to the Ministers, and to exhibit damning proofs of their own versatility and want of principle; and Mr. Hobart had the satisfaction to find, that they rather wanted a check than a stimulus, a bridle than a spur. Mr. George Knox made a motion for the admission of Catholic members to seats in Parliament; and, being seconded by Major Doyle, and supported by Colonel Hutchinson, and some others, Mr. Knox ventured to divide the House upon it; when it was rejected by one hundred and sixty-three votes to sixty-nine. The bill, however, passed the Commons with very little further opposition.

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 89. Although Mr. Plowden accuses Dr. Duigenan, on this occasion, in *general* terms, of having " collected together whatever the acrimonious bigotry of former days had suggested against the Catholics, and retailed it with new and enthusiastic bitterness;" (Vol. II. p. 408.) he does not venture to specify, much less to combat, any of the positions which he thus condemns. Nor does he even condescend to notice the Doctor's proposal for introducing the above addition to the oath, nor to say a single word on the declaration of his Popish brethren respecting it. From a Catholic historian, surely, some explanation of a matter, bearing so immediately upon the subject of discussion, might have been expected. But it sometimes happens, that duty demands exposition, where prudence imposes silence; and prudence here seems to have prevailed over duty.

When it was carried to the Lords, the Bishop of Killala (brother to Lord Ellenborough) stood forth a volunteer in its support. In the fervour of his zeal for the Catholic cause, he did not scruple to libel our ancestors, by ascribing those penal statutes, which originated in the paramount motive of self-preservation, to their bigotry and spirit of persecution. With equal ignorance and presumption, he reviled the laws themselves, which had, for seventy years, kept Ireland in a state of peace and tranquillity, as impolitic and unjust. And, with a disregard of truth, becoming neither his rank nor his profession, he represented the conduct of the Catholics as constantly and uniformly loyal.* The Lord Chancellor (Clare) expressed his wish to have suffered the bill to pass *sub silentio*; but when the general principles of anarchy, the rage of innovation, and the epidemical phrenzy, seemed to have reached that House; when inflammatory declamations, and ill-advised mistatements, came from the Reverend Bench, it attached to the existing government, and he felt it necessary to rise in defence of the Constitution. He justly imputed the observations of the Bishop of Killala, to his utter ignorance of the laws and constitution of the country from which he came, and of the laws and constitution of the country in which he lived. Then, disclaiming all personal bigotry or acrimony, he ably justified the penal code, on the ground of necessity, and exposed the pernicious tendency of Catholic tenets, as even recently proclaimed by their Primate, Doctor Troy.† His Lordship most pointedly condemned the powers assumed by the Popish Convention of levying taxes upon their community for defraying the expences, attending their claims and proceedings, which, if they were fair, just, and open, would require no such support.

The conduct of the Irish Parliament, in passing this bill, after their recent declarations upon the subject, fully justifies the following observation of a contemporary historian:—"The extraordinary inconsistency of the Irish Parliament, in rejecting, with indignant contempt, the claims of the Roman Catholics in the year 1792, and the tameness with

* Plowden's Historical Review, Vol. II. p. 418.

† Idem Ibid. p. 419.

which they now conceded, much more than what had been, at that time, demanded, joined to their fears and imbecility, in expressing their wishes to renounce their power and pre-eminence, to gratify a democratic faction, must convince every Irishman of spirit, and common sense, that such an Assembly, constantly oscillating between one extreme and another, and convulsed by party zeal, was incapable of promoting the peace and prosperity of his native country; and that he must depend for such promotion on nothing but the firmness, the wisdom, and disinterestedness, of an Imperial Parliament." *

Part of this observation applies to an offer made, by some of the Irish gentry at this time, for surrendering their property in boroughs, in compliment to the advocates of Parliamentary Reform. However its justice in that particular point may be questioned, it is undoubtedly correct in its application to the conduct of the Irish Parliament, on the subject of the law now passed for giving the elective franchise, and other political privileges, to the Papists. That conduct was most disgraceful, and fully justified the severe remarks which were made on it, by individuals of every party.

It must be remarked, that, by this measure of the Irish Legislature, the Romanists of that country were admitted to every civil privilege and advantage to which Protestants were admitted; save only that *an act of their own*, a refusal to take the oath of supremacy, and the oaths and engagements prescribed to be taken by the Test Act, precluded a few Irish Peers of that persuasion from voting in the House of Lords, and their Commoners from sitting in the House of Commons. They were also, by the same refusal, precluded from filling about two and thirty civil employments, among which were the offices of Lord Lieutenant, Lord Chancellor, Judges, and Commander in Chief of the Army; in the persons filling which offices was vested the superior executive authority of the State—" Situations," as a contemporary writer judiciously observes, " of legislative and executive authority,

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 89.

which can never be conceded to Romanists, while they deny the supremacy of the State, and while even the form of a Protestant establishment is preserved in Ireland." *

However essential it was to the safety of the State to make these few reservations, or, to speak more correctly, to refuse to admit Papists to offices of high trust and command, without submitting to the same conditions, without subscribing to which no Protestant could hold them, and, by so admitting, to give them a marked superiority of privilege over the members of the Established Church, which would have been little less than treason to the country;—and, however important the concessions already made to the Papists were, and they could not fail to be important when they admitted them to the full enjoyment of religious and civil liberty; still, while there was something withholden, and something to acquire, it was perfectly clear, from their past conduct, that they would not rest satisfied. Mr. Burke, therefore, had woefully deceived himself, and deluded Mr. Pitt, when he taught him to believe, that the passing of this act, conferring privileges and favours unknown to the subjects of any other country dissenting from the established religion of the State, would conciliate the whole body of the Romanists, so as to secure their attachment to the Government and Constitution. The Irish Government was very soon convinced of its inefficacy, and acknowledged the truth of *their* predictions, who had forewarned them, that indulgence would encourage discontent, and that concession would only give birth to fresh demands.

The spirit of disaffection continued to spread throughout the country, without any diminution of its rage, from the late concessions. The *United Irishmen* had associated on the plan of the affiliated societies in France, and a new attempt having been successfully made to unite the Romanists and the Presbyterians in one bond of hatred to the existing Constitution, this society was chiefly composed of persons of both persuasions. They corresponded with the seditious clubs in every part of the British dominions, and carried on their treasonable plans with

* Duigenan's Answer to Grattan's Address, p. 26.

the utmost activity and vigour. In the inflammatory publications which they had circulated, with incredible industry, over the whole country, the necessity of *emancipating* the Romanists was strongly enforced; and, in return, the Catholic Committee, in Dublin, spoke of them with respect and gratitude. At one of the meetings of this Committee, in March, 1792, Mr. Keogh, a leading member, said,—" For a late publication, the Digest of the Popery Laws, the United Irishmen, and their respectable chairman, the Honourable Simon Butler, demand our warmest gratitude." * And that the United Irishmen acted in co-operation with the Defenders, appears certain from the report of the Irish House of Commons in 1798.

The government found it necessary to pass, without delay, two bills, one for preventing the importation of arms, gunpowder, and ammunition, and the removing and keeping gunpowder, arms, and ammunition, without licence; and the other, for preventing the election or appointment of unlawful assemblies. Lord Westmoreland, in a conversation, at this time, with a private gentleman, on the treasonable disposition so generally manifested, asked,—" Suppose I were to sound a trumpet on Essex Bridge, to call the friends of government to my aid, who would follow me!"—The gentleman answered,—" Every Protestant in Ireland; they know they have no safety but in British connection."

The object of the United Irishmen was to separate Ireland from England, and to establish a democratic Republic on the ruins of the Monarchy. At the very formation of this treasonable association, its designs were unfolded to the public, in terms too plain to admit of mistake, by one of its most distinguished members, Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone.—" It is proposed," said he, " that, at this juncture, a society should be instituted, having much of the *secrecy*, and somewhat of the ceremonial, attached to *free-masonry*; with so much *secrecy*, as may communicate *curiosity*, *uncertainty*, and *expectation*, to the minds of surrounding men; with so much *impressive* and *affecting ceremony*, in all its internal economy, as, without impeding real business, may strike

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 100.

the soul, through the senses," (this was exactly the ceremonial of the Romish Church service,) " and, addressing the whole man, may animate his philosophy by the energy of his passions.

" Secrecy is *expedient* and *necessary* ; it will make the bond of union more *cohesive*, and the *spirit* of that *union* more *ardent* and more *condensed*. It will invelope this *dense flame* with a cloud of GLOOMY AMBIGUITY, that will both *facilitate its own agency*, and, at the same time, *confound* and terrify its enemies by their ignorance of the *design*, the *extent*, the *direction*, and the *consequences* ; it will *throw a veil* over those individuals whose *professional prudence* might make them wish to be *concealed*, until a manifestation of themselves become *absolutely necessary*."

By a reference to Professor Robinson's proofs of a conspiracy against all the religions and governments of Europe, there will be found a pretty exact similarity between this Irish Union and the German Union, as described by *Weishaupt*, its founder. It has been truly observed, that, at the time when this seditious society of United Irishmen was formed, those grievances, which were afterwards urged as the chief *pretext* for its enormities, were not in existence.—No Convention Act, no Insurrection Act, no Treasonable Correspondence Act, had then passed ;—every mode of communication was open, the war had not begun, nor was the public mind agitated by any alarm. In these circumstances, (in which there was not merely a liberty, but an absolute licentiousness of scope, both for discussion and co-operation) can it for a moment be supposed that men, who only wished to effect a temperate reform in Parliament (which was often alledged, in direct opposition to the fact, as the sole motive of these associated traitors) would have adopted *gloomy*, *impenetrable*, *secrecy*, as the first feature of their design? Was it in human nature thus deliberately to prefer *cowardly ambiguity* to *manly candour*, if he had not been felt that there was an indispensable necessity for such a procedure? And whence could the idea of such a necessity have arisen, but from the consciousness of a purpose which would not bear to be disclosed ? It is not less the result

of experience, than it is the maxim of Divine Wisdom, "that men love *darkness* rather than *light*, BECAUSE THEIR DEEDS ARE EVIL." *

Confident of success, however, these traitors occasionally threw aside that veil of secrecy which they were advised to assume, and explained, with boldness, the objects of their machinations. They declared that the "general aim of the society should be, to make the light of philanthropy (a *pale* and *ineffectual light*) converge, and, by converging, kindle into *ardent, energetic, enthusiastic,* love for Ireland; that genuine, unadulterated, enthusiasm which descends from a luminous head to a *burning heart,* and *impels* the spirit of man to exertions greatly good, or unequivocally great. For this society is not to rest *satisfied* in drawing SPECULATIVE *plans of reform,* and *improvement,* but to be PRACTICALLY BUSIED in their *accomplishment.* Were the hand of *Locke* to hold from Heaven a *scheme* of *government,* most *perfectly adapted* to the *nature* and *capabilities* of the *Irish Nation,* it would drop to the ground a mere sounding scroll, were there no other means of giving it effect than *its own intrinsic excellence.*

"This society is likely to be a means the most powerful for the promotion of a great end.—What end? *The Rights of Man* in *Ireland*; the *greatest happiness* of the *greatest number* in this Island; the *inherent* and *indefeasible claims* of *every free nation* to *rest in this nation*; the WILL and the POWER to be happy, to *pursue* the *common weal* as an *individual* pursues his *private welfare,* and to STAND, IN INSULATED INDEPENDENCE, AN IMPERATORIAL PEOPLE. To gain a knowledge of the real state of this heterogeneous country; to form a *summary* of the NATIONAL WILL and PLEASURE in points *most interesting to national happiness*; and when such a summary is formed, to put this DOCTRINE, as speedily as may be, into PRACTICE, will be the purpose of this *central society,* or lodge, from which *other lodges,* in *different towns,* will *radiate.*

* Essays on the Political Circumstances of Ireland, written during the Administration of Earl Camden, by Alexander Knox, Esq. p. 141, 142.

"The GREATEST HAPPINESS of the GREATEST NUMBER. On the *rock of this principle* let the society rest; by *this*, let it judge and determine *every political question*; and *whatever* is *necessary* for *this purpose*, let it not be accounted *hazardous*, but rather our *interest*, our *duty*, our *glory*, and our *common religion*.—The rights of men are the rights of God; and to vindicate the one is to maintain the other: we must be free to serve him whose service is perfect freedom.

"This is *enthusiasm*; it is so; and who, that has a spark of Hibernicism in his nature, does not feel it kindle into a *flame of generous enthusiasm?* Who, that has a drop of sympathy in his heart, when he looks around him, and sees how HAPPINESS is *heaped up* in MOUNDS, and how MISERY is *diffused* and *divided amongst the* MILLION, does not exclaim, *alas! for suffering!* and *oh! for the* POWER *to redress it!* And who is there that has enthusiasm sufficient to make an exclamation, would not *combine* with others, as honest as himself, to make the WILL live in the ACT, and to *swear* WE WILL REDRESS IT."

Well might it be asked,—Is this the voice of men seeking CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM? Is it not, on the contrary, as outrageous a denunciation as could be conveyed in language, not only against the constitution of *this* country, but against the order of society in *every* country? What is that decisive expression of *contempt* for all *speculative plans of reform*, that boasted resolution of being *busied in accomplishment*, and that emphatic despair of succeeding in any measure, however useful or suitable, without some other means of giving it effect besides its own *intrinsic excellence?* Do not these declarations alone amount to a determinate rejection of every constitutional idea, and as determinate an adoption of the worst revolutionary expedients? What are these *other* means? They are none of the resources of reason; none of the natural weapons of truth; these are all voted down, and discarded for ever in that imperious decree on the futility of *intrinsic excellence*; for there are nothing but *intrinsic excellence* demonstrated, and urged with zeal and perseverance. What, then, are these means? They are *intrigue, cabal, conspiracy,* TERROR, (for there is no alternative) and, of course, every thing, however dreadful, to which *terror* relates, and without which it would become an unreal

mockery, more contemptible than even *intrinsic excellence* itself.—And to what end are these dark expedients to be applied? We are not left to collect this from ambiguous hints; we are told, in what might be termed the very language of revolutions, that it is to break the tie which binds Ireland to the British Empire, to establish their former democracy in its boldest and broadest form, and to new-model property, so as to effect the widest possible distribution of it amongst the populace. *

Although the Romanists had recently experienced the most liberal indulgence from the Legislature, the Defenders, in the Summer of 1793, committed the most dreadful outrages in many parts of the kingdom, but particularly in the counties of Kerry, Cork, Wexford, Limerick, Queen's County, Meath, Westmeath, Dublin, Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, and in the liberties of Drogheda, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Mayo, Sligo, Armagh, Down, Donegal, and Derry.† Nor were the Presbyterians of the North less active in their violent and rebellious proceedings.—In fact, it is evident that the Romanists and Presbyterians had cordially united for the destruction of the existing constitution, both ecclesiastical and civil, to which they were equally disaffected. But the latter wished to abolish every thing like an Established Church, the Hierachy, and every *form* of religious worship; whereas the former intended, no doubt, to establish the Romish Church on the ruins of the Protestant Church, and, confiding in the superiority of their own numbers over those of their Presbyterian associates, to fix the Catholic ascendancy on a basis not to be shaken, and to the utter exclusion of the Protestant faith. The Presbyterians, indeed, at a subsequent period, became convinced that such was their object, and, accordingly, left them to fight their own battles.

The insurgents became so powerful, at the commencement of 1794, as to attack the military, in some parts of the country; while they held their seditious meetings in the very seat of government. The Viceroy,

* Knox's Essays on Ireland, p. 151, 152.

† Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 125.

however, the Earl of Westmoreland, perceiving the necessity of acting with decision, adopted the necessary measures for the repression and punishment of these audacious and criminal attempts. In this he was ably seconded by the magistrates of the capital, and particularly by Mr. John Giffard, the High Sheriff. These gentlemen, in the night of the 23d of May, 1794, repaired to a meeting of United Irishmen, held at Tailors' Hall, in Back Lane, dispersed the members, and seized their books and papers. A Clergyman, of the name of Jackson, was apprehended on a charge of treason, tried, condemned, and would have been executed, had he not escaped the sentence of the law, by the commission of suicide. He went to Ireland, as a Missionary from France, to settle, with the traitors there, the plan of an invasion by the French. Mr. Hamilton Rowan, who was concerned in the same plot, effected his escape from Newgate, in which prison he was confined for sedition. Such was the state of Ireland, when Lord Westmoreland was recalled, and when Lord Fitzwilliam was appointed to succeed him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

State of Ireland on the recal of Lord Westmoreland—Lord Fitzwilliam, Viceroy—Mr. Grattan, his chief counsellor—The Romanists encouraged by Mr. Grattan to demand their *emancipation*—Weak conduct of the Viceroy—Lord Fitzwilliam recalled—Factious language of Mr. Grattan to the Romanists—Lord Camden appointed Viceroy—Attempt to assassinate the Lords' Justices—Judicious conduct of Mr. Pelham, (now Earl of Chichester) Secretary to the Viceroy—The Parliament reject, by a decisive majority, the claims of the Romanists—The United Irishmen arm themselves—The Yeomanry established—Insidious conduct of the Catholics on this occasion—The French attempt to invade Ireland, at the instigation of the rebels—but are prevented by a storm—Proclamations issued against treasonable associations—Seizure of arms by the King's troops—Message from the Viceroy, on the insurrection in Ulster—Mr. Grattan describes the Insurgents as *peaceable* and loyal subjects, and imputes the disturbances to the measures taken to quell them—Mr. Grattan's statements confuted by the declaration of the rebels themselves—The system of concession carried by government to a dangerous and unwarrantable extent—Remarks on the Popish establishment at Maynooth—Several of the Students join the rebels—M'Nevin sent to the continent to hasten the departure of a French force—A French Agent arrives in London—Conduct of the Opposition in England and Ireland at this period—False conclusions of Mr. Fox—His misrepresentations corrected.—The assertions of Mr. Fox and Mr. Erskine contradicted by the depositions of the principal rebels—Lord Moira's speech in the Irish Parliament, answered by the Lord Chancellor Clare—The gross impositions practised on Lord Moira detected and exposed—Lord Clare takes a view of the conduct of the British government towards Ireland, and proves it to have been one continued system of conciliation from the year 1779—Inconsistency of Lord Moira's present theory with his past practice—Lord Clare ascribes the increased violence of the disaffected to Lord Moira's speech in the British Parliament—Lord Moira's motion rejected by 35 to 10—Similar motion in the House of Commons, by Sir Lawrence Parsons, negatived by 156 to 19—Meeting of the rebels at Shane's Castle—They announce the establishment of an union with the disaffected in England and Scotland—Loyal men pointed out for assassination in the newspapers devoted to the rebels.—The United Irishmen in the county of Down declare Lord Moira to be a tyrant—Measures for the grand attack concerted by the rebels—Remarkable interview between Hughes and Neilson, two of the leaders of the rebels, and Mr. Grattan, at Tinnehinch—The law of misprision of treason explained—Government censured for weakness, in not making this interview the subject of a legal investigation—The whole plot of the rebels disclosed to government by Thomas Reynolds, who had been persuaded to join them—Many of the principal conspirators seized in Dublin—Preparations for the intended attack on the capital—Reward offered

for the apprehension of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—He is taken in Dublin—Apprehension of the Shears, and other rebels—The rebellion breaks out on the 23d May—Neilson seized in reconnoitering Newgate—Disaffection of the Roman Catholic Yeomen—The Roman Catholic servants engaged in the conspiracy—The rebellion breaks out in various parts of the kingdom—Martial law proclaimed—Rebels defeated in different places by the Yeomanry—The rebels take Enniscorthy, and obtain possession of Wexford—They are joined by the Romanists of the neighbouring counties—They defeat a body of troops commanded by Colonel Walpole—The battle of Ross—Lord Mountjoy killed—The rebels forced to retreat—221 Protestants murdered, by the rebels, at Scullabogue—Rebels defeated at Arklow—They attack the town of Antrim—Lord O'Neil killed—They are defeated in the county of Down by General Nugent—They fortify the strong post of Vinegar Hill—Are attacked there by the Loyalists, and compelled to fly—Cruelties exercised on the Protestants in the Rebel Camp—Lord Camden recalled, and Lord Cornwallis appointed to succeed him—97 Protestants murdered in cold blood, on the bridge at Wexford—Conduct of Dr. Caulfield, the Popish bishop of Wexford, during the rebellion in that country—He gives his public benedictions to the rebels—Accused, by one of his own priests, of having directed the last battle in Wexford to be fought, and of blessing men whom he ought to have excommunicated—Obtains a certificate of loyalty from Lord Cornwallis—Denies that protections granted by priests were respected—The contrary proved to be the fact, from a protection granted by himself—Objects of the Opposition, and of the government, in imputing the rebellion to other than religious causes—A great mass of the rebels proved to be influenced by religious motives—Loyalty of the Catholic nobility and principal gentry—Danger of Popish principles acting upon low and uninformed minds—Several of the rebel chiefs taken, and executed at Wexford—Bagnal Harvey acknowledges that the Popish priests were deeply concerned in the rebellion, and that the extirpation of Protestants was their main design—Battle of Castlecomer—Execution of the two Shears—The other rebel chiefs are pardoned, on condition of disclosing the whole circumstances of the conspiracy, and of transporting themselves for life—Twenty of them are sent to Fort George, in Scotland, to be confined there till a peace—A body of French troops land in Killala bay, and are joined by a great number of rebels—Several Irish priests flock to their standard—Father Dease, being taken prisoner, declares that the priests were encouraged to join the French by Dr. Bellew, the Popish Bishop of the Diocese—The French advance to Castlebar, where they defeat the King's troops—They march towards Sligo—receive a check from a small corps under Colonel Vereker—Are overtaken by General Lake—Surrender at discretion—The French express the greatest contempt for their Irish Allies—Ridicule their bigotry, and express their astonishment, at finding the Pope so suddenly in Ireland, after having driven him out of Italy—End of the rebellion.

[1798.] By the firmness and vigour which Lord Westmoreland displayed, after the impolitic concessions which had been made to the Romanists, Ireland had, at last, been restored to a state of comparative tranquillity. The leading nobility and gentry had professed themselves

satisfied with the indulgences which they had received, and seemed disposed to wait till a more favourable period for pressing their further claims to a participation of political power and influence. The great body of the Romanists, indeed, including the Defenders, and no small portion of the United Irishmen, had resolved to exert every effort to produce a revolution in the country, on French principles, and were silently preparing means to elude the vigilance of the government, and to secure the accomplishment of their object. In this state of things, Lord Westmoreland was recalled, and Lord Fitzwilliam appointed to succeed him as Viceroy.

Mr. Grattan was the chosen adviser of the Lord Lieutenant, and he had taken special care, before the arrival of his patron in Ireland, to assume great merit to himself for the measures which he had recommended him to pursue, in favour of the Romanists, and to prepare the Romanists themselves to second his exertions by presenting petitions, from every quarter of the kingdom, not soliciting as a favour, but claiming as a right, a full and perfect communication of all privileges and offices of the State, without exception, and that every law which created any distinction between them and Protestants should be repealed.*

The weakness of the Viceroy in thus submitting himself to the guidance of this rash demagogue, in disgracing his government by dismissing from their offices all the most tried and faithful servants of the Crown, and by admitting to his Court and Table the most inveterate enemies of the Protestant Church; † and, lastly, by pledging himself to a Legislative Act, which he was not authorized to propose, nor able to carry; soon convinced Mr. Pitt of the necessity of appointing another Viceroy.

The anger of Grattan and the Ponsonbies, on the recall of their favourite Viceroy, was wrought up to the highest pitch. The former, in an address to the Roman Catholics of Dublin, urged them to continue their demands,

* Duigenan's Answer to Grattan's Address, p. 22.

† Idem, Ibid. p. 23.

while the Ministry were embarrassed by the war; and told them that it depended on themselves whether they would permit the return of their *old Taskmasters* to power.* The Ponsonbies, by their extensive country

* Grattan's expressions were these:—"I tremble at the return to power of your old *task-masters*. That combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice; should such a combination (at once inflamed as it must be now by the favour of the *British Court*, and by the reprobations of the *Irish People*) return to power, I have no hesitation to say, that they will *extinguish Ireland, or Ireland must remove them*. It is not your case only, but that of the nation; I find the country already *committed* in the struggle; I beg to be committed along with her, and to abide the issue of her fortunes."—*Grattan's Address to the Citizens of Dublin.*

It is justly observed, by a temperate and intelligent contemporary writer, that this address (which contained much other inflammatory matter of the same kind) was calculated to rouse the passions of the multitude to madness.

"When the indigent, the ignorant, the inflammable vulgar, read or heard of *dreadful guardians* succeeding, of *old task-masters* returning, of *tyranny*, *insult*, *rapacity*, *slander*, *malice*, and, above all, when they received that unequivocal assurance, "THEY WILL EXTINGUISH IRELAND, OR IRELAND MUST REMOVE THEM; what, in the name of Heaven, must have been their apprehensions? Who, in their view, would be the dreadful guardians? Evidently those who were to succeed Lord Fitzwilliam. Who,—the old task-masters? Those, of course, who had been in power before Lord Fitzwilliam took possession of the government;" and to whom, be it added, the Romanists were indebted for the possession of a more rational, a more extensive, and better-secured, civil liberty, than the most favoured subjects of any state in the known world, those of Great Britain only excepted.——"And what was to be done with these? *Why Ireland must* REMOVE *them, or they would* EXTINGUISH *Ireland.* What, then, on the whole, was it possible for them to conclude, but that on a new Chief Governor attempting to land in the country, they ought to rise in a mass, and, by one grand effort, rid themselves of all those whom they were taught to consider as obnoxious to them, either in the name of expulsion or of *extermination*. An inflamed multitude would be little apt to enquire, whether the word *remove* meant the one or the other.

"Now, could my Lord George Gordon, or could, indeed, any *enragé* that ever existed, have taken a more promising method of preparing the popular mind for insurrection? At the very moment, too, that Mr. Grattan held out this direct invitation to riot, tumult, and rebellion, for in no other light can his virulent address be considered, he expressed his full conviction that the very object for which he, and the Romanists, were contending, which they, absurdly, called Catholic *Emancipation*, must, and would, be obtained. "Your Emancipation will pass, rely upon it; your Emancipation must pass." Why Mr. Grattan, therefore, in the midst of all this certainty of success, should use a language which despair itself would not have justified; why, when, by his own acknowledgement, the Roman Catholics had still so fair a prospect, he, their friend and advocate, should thus, like

influence, procured popular meetings to be convened, and addresses to be voted to Parliament, deprecating the removal of their patron. Similar efforts were made in the House of Commons, but they failed of success. The motions for censure were negatived, and a strong sense of approbation of the conduct of the British Cabinet was manifested by the House. During the state of inflammation produced by these party-struggles, Lord Camden arrived to take upon him the government of Ireland. On the evening of his landing, an ineffectual attempt was made to assassinate the Lords Justices, Fitzgibbon and Foster, who had discharged the duties of the government after the departure of Lord Fitzwilliam, and who were generally supposed to be most obnoxious to the late Administration.—But the riot was suppressed, and, in a few days, the new Viceroy found himself at perfect ease in the tranquil exercise of his office.

The Viceroy's principal Secretary was Mr. Pelham, (now Earl of Chichester) who applied himself assiduously to the discovery of such measures as should secure the Royal authority in Ireland. He soon perceived that the irritation which was artfully supported, arose, in a great degree, from the abundance of wild and visionary notions which issued hourly from the press. He endeavoured, therefore, like a wise Statesman, to employ this engine in order to give a new direction to the public mind.—He became himself a member of literary societies; encouraged discussions of abstract and harmless questions of rural, and even domestic, economy. He ingratiated himself with the learned idlers of the nation; and so far succeeded in his view, as either to detach them from political topics, or to direct their political efforts to the useful purpose of soothing and instructing, instead of inflaming and misleading, the people.

By this time the United Irishmen had formed a close connection with the French Directory, and looked to them principally for the success of

" Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
" With *Até* by his side, come hot from hell—
" Cry havock, and let slip the dogs of war,"

ingenious men may conjecture, but I shall not pretend to decide."

Knox's Essays on the political circumstances of Ireland, p. 7—10.

their rebellious plans. During the short Administration of Lord Fitzwilliam, their operations had been almost disregarded; as they wanted that consequence in the public eye which discontent, patronized by a Parliamentary opposition, seldom fails to command. Upon his Lordship's removal, their rancour, fermented by the venomous breath of faction, burst forth with additional fury; and the public discovery, which had been recently made, on the trial of Jackson, the spy of the French Government, that Theobald Wolf Tone, the founder of the Society, (who was also the avowed agent of the Catholic Committee) had been selected to convey information from the Rebels of Ireland to the Directory at Paris, taught them that they could no longer conceal their views beneath the flimsy mask of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation. This discovery, too, had no slight effect on the decision which took place on the discussion of the claims of the Romanists in Parliament, where they were rejected by a decisive majority.

The success of the French armies, and the defection of those Allies in concert with whom Great Britain had begun the war, opened such a prospect of success to the rebellious, that the needy and discontented of every country were easily persuaded to follow the footsteps of the profligate Parisians. The war began to affect public credit; disappointed speculators were obvious implements for the purposes of treason; and clubs of an infinite variety of denominations were instituted under the patronage of the parent society of United Irishmen. For preparing the minds of the poor and the ignorant for the furtherance of their views, they encouraged school-boys and apprentices to assemble, in order to hear seditious lectures, and to be instructed in doctrines suitable to the use intended to be made of their inexperience. By these means, the whole mass of the lower orders, in the Capital of Dublin, was infected. Some of the youthful traitors were betrayed, by their zeal, into the commission of crimes, which called for the interposition of the law. And one or two examples having been, necessarily, made, the system could no longer be sustained without danger, and was, accordingly, abandoned. It was then determined, by the society, to adopt an universal plan of military organization; to provide the common people with weapons of a simple construction and of little cost; and thus to furnish themselves.

with a sufficient force against the arrival of those troops which had been promised by France. But a plan so extensive, required a considerable time for its completion. It was amongst the old Volunteer Companies of the Northern Presbyterians that it could be begun with effect; and, amongst these, the old jealousy of Roman Catholic predominance could only be subdued by the exclusion, at first, of all persons of that persuasion. This jealousy had existed from the period of the Revolution, and had, at different times, been productive of mutual outrage. For a while, however, it gave place to the overruling desire of subverting the Constitution.

In the autumn of 1796, government found it expedient to propose to all loyal subjects to embody themselves, as corps of yeomanry, for the defence of the country. The Protestant members of the corporation, and other inhabitants of Dublin, set the example, by raising four regiments of infantry, and four troops of horse. But this wise and salutary measure, which eventually proved the salvation of the country, was strongly opposed by the leading Romanists of Dublin, and by all the active members of the Catholic Committee. Their efforts, however, to prevent its adoption having proved ineffectual, they waited on Mr. Pelham, and asked permission to raise a corps of Romanists; but they were, very properly, told that, if they wished to serve their King and country, they might join their Protestant fellow-subjects. Thus foiled, they published a string of resolutions, replete with invectives against government, for having presumed to adopt a measure so admirably calculated to defeat the plans of those whose object was to destroy the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the realm. In the course of six months, the patriotic corps of yeomanry amounted to thirty-seven thousand men, and the number was afterwards extended to fifty thousand. *

In the summer of 1796, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor, who had taken an active part in the rebellious projects of the United Irishmen, which had now acquired a formidable degree of con-

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 159.

consistency, had an interview with the French General, Hoche, in Switzerland, at which it was settled, that a French force should be sent to the assistance of the Irish Rebels as soon as possible. The attempt was accordingly made at the close of that year, when fifteen thousand French troops reached Bantry Bay; but the fleet being dispersed in a storm, and having lost several of their ships, the plan was defeated for the present.

The attempt, however, served to convince the rebels that the French were serious in their promises of support; and they were accordingly resolved to exert every effort for completing that plan of military organization, which would enable them to act with effect, whenever the moment for action should come. In November, 1796, a proclamation was issued, stating, that " divers ill-affected persons had entered into illegal and treasonable associations, in the counties of Down, Antrim, Tyrone, Londonderry, and Armagh; and, for effecting their treasonable designs, had assassinated divers loyal subjects, and threatened to assassinate all others who should endeavour to detect their treasons, or should enrol themselves under officers commissioned by his Majesty, for the defence of the kingdom, and also procured arms and ammunition; that some evil-minded persons had broken open the King's stores at Belfast, and took thereout ten barrels of gunpowder; and that many large bodies of men had embodied and arrayed themselves, under a pretence of sowing corn and digging potatoes."

In consequence of these open acts of rebellion, General Lake, who commanded the King's troops, displayed the utmost vigilance and activity, in searching for, and seizing, the stores of arms collected by the insurgents; in which he was materially assisted by Sir George Hill, whose zeal and vigour, in the suppression of treason and sedition, were of infinite service. In the course of the year 1797, nearly 130,000 arms, of different descriptions, were seized in the province of Ulster alone. On the thirteenth of March, 1797, the Viceroy sent a message to both Houses of Parliament, stating, " That an organized system of robbery and murder existed in the province of Ulster, which bade defiance to the exertions of the civil power; and that, by the firm and

temperate conduct of the General of the District, a considerable quantity of arms had been taken; and that he hoped, by a continuance of vigorous measures, the constitutional authority of the civil power would be restored." In the debate which followed this message, Mr. Grattan, with his accustomed acrimony, condemned the coercive measures to which government had had recourse for quelling those disturbances, which he had the ignorance, or the effrontery, to ascribe to the provocation which his Majesty's *peaceable* and *loyal* subjects had received from wanton and unnecessary acts of severity. Admirably qualified must that man be, for high situations of trust and importance in a government, and in an eminent degree must he possess all the necessary qualifications for a statesman, who can thus confound the *effect* with the *cause*, and gravely advise a recourse to acts of indulgence and concession for restoring armed rebels to order, and for inspiring them with a proper sense of their duty and their allegiance! If Mr. Grattan were sincere in his assertions, he must have been blinded by that spirit of party, which raged in his bosom with greater violence than in that of any other of the demagogues of the day, and which displayed itself, on every occasion, without intermission, as without diminution. And if he really believed that any concessions, short of the absolute surrender of the ecclesiastical and civil constitution of the realm, could satisfy the rebels, his credulity must have exceeded any bounds which a knowledge of the human character will allow a man to prescribe to the weakness of a rational being.—Fortunately, for the truth of history, the authority of the leading rebels themselves supplies the most unqualified contradiction to all his representations on this subject, as well as to all the statements, on the same points, of his parliamentary associates and friends, in Ireland and in England. Every mode of conciliation, which human wisdom, or human ingenuity, could devise, had been already tried; during the present reign, nothing had been omitted which could tend to attach the Irish Papists to the government; this spirit had even been carried much farther than sound policy could warrant; indeed, the cup of concession had been drained to the very dregs. Not only had the fullest freedom of religious worship, the most perfect liberty of conscience and of conduct, been secured to the Papists; but they had been allowed the privilege of interference in the formation of

the legislative body; and enjoyed every other political privilege which Protestants enjoyed, with the very few exceptions which have been before stated, and none of which could affect the great mass of the people. Nay, government had gone still farther, and, as if anxious for the diffusion and perpetuation of *error*, to apply the mildest term to the superstitious rites and tenets of the Church of Rome, they had erected and endowed a Popish College, for students in theology, and for providing the followers of Popery with an ample supply of priests. The annals of history do not present a similar instance of concession in any country, in which there has existed an established church! The pretence for this act of ill-timed, and most undeserved, liberality, on the part of the Irish government, was to prevent sending young Papists, who were intended for the church, abroad for education. Dr. Duigenan, in his "Fair Representation of the State of Ireland," declares, that £40,000 were given out of the public purse to the trustees appointed to manage this establishment, and to receive donations for it; that £8,000 per annum had been regularly granted for the support of two hundred students. He farther states, that it afterwards appeared, upon an enquiry made by the Irish Parliament of 1798, that *sixty-nine* students only were maintained in this College; that it was currently reported, and very generally believed, that about *thirty-six* students from this monastery, had, upon the breaking out of the rebellion in that year, joined the insurgents, and fought at Kilcock and other places, against the King's troops. Certain it is, that sixteen or seventeen were expelled from it on account of rebellion, but the governors waited, *with becoming prudence*, till the rebellion was suppressed, before they executed this act of necessary and politic severity.*—Some students had been slain in action, and others fled to escape justice. The author, above quoted, informs us, that the President of this College was Dr. Hussey, the titular Catholic Bishop of Waterford, who published, previous to the rebellion of 1798, "A Pastoral Letter," of treason and rebellion, in consequence of which he was obliged to fly that kingdom,

* *Fair Representation, &c.* p. 220.

and is said to have died in exile.* The annual allowance which the Protestant Parliament of Ireland granted to this Popish institution, has been continued and extended by the Imperial Parliament.

The views entertained by the Catholic Committee, had not been such as to entitle the body which they represented to these extraordinary indulgences. It has been seen, that their agent, Tone, was the founder of the *United Irishmen*; their Secretary was afterwards sent into exile for his treasonable practices; many of their members were implicated in the rebellion; some fled from justice; and others were strongly suspected. One of their principal advisers, M'Nevin, was a member of the Rebel Irish Directory in 1797; and another, Lewins, was Minister Plenipotentiary from the Rebels to the French Directory. It is also known, that they gave their agent, Tone, £1,534 2*s.* 6*d.* for his trouble in composing those manifestoes with which they corrupted the public mind; that they paid the sum of £2,113 1*s.* 4*d.* to PRINTERS alone, and that, upon the attainment of their *ultimatum*, in 1793, they voted £2,000 for a statue to his Majesty, (which they never erected) and immediately after issued a mandate for levying farther contributions on their body, "for the heavy and growing expences of the Catholic cause."

In June, 1797, Doctor M'Nevin was sent, by the United Irishmen, to the continent, to press the expected succours from France. He had an interview with the French Resident at Hamburgh, to whom he presented a memorial to be forwarded to the Directory, in which he detailed the preparations which had been made for a general rising of the Irish Rebels. The French Republic was assured, that all the expences which she either had incurred, or should incur, for affording assistance to the Rebels, should be faithfully repaid, out of the confiscated lands of the Church, and the property of the Loyalists; and M'Nevin was authorized to raise, either in France or Spain, half a million of money, for

* *Strictures upon an Historical Review of the State of Ireland, by Francis Plowden, Esq. or a justification of the conduct of the English Governments in that country, from the reign of Henry the Second, to the Union of Great Britain and Ireland*, p. 142.

the use of the Insurgents; to solicit a further supply of arms, and to engage in their service as many of the Irish officers, in the service of France, as he could persuade to join them. Both M'Nevin and Lewens pressed their suit, at Paris, with great eagerness; and they declared the resolution of the Rebels to be, the destruction of the existing Constitution in Church and State, a total separation of Ireland from England, and the establishment of an independent Irish Republic, the Directory of which was already named.

The French Directory, not chusing to place implicit reliance on the partial statements of these emissaries of rebellion, sent a confidential agent to England, to collect accurate information respecting the real state of Ireland. Finding a difficulty in proceeding to Dublin, this agent requested a proper person might meet him in London, qualified to afford him the necessary information.—This person is supposed to have been Lord Edward Fitzgerald; and the representation which he made was such as induced the French government to promise efficacious assistance to the Rebels without delay.

Some difference occurred between the rebel emissaries and the French Ministers.—The former limited their application for succours to ten thousand men, wishing only for a sufficient force to enable them to subdue the King's troops, and to establish their projected Republic. But the French intended to send a more considerable force for securing the entire subjection of the country, and for holding it when subdued. This difference, however, was not sufficient to occasion any coolness, much less a rupture of the negotiation. On the contrary, the French government adopted active measures for carrying their promises of assistance into effect. And, in the autumn of ninety-seven, the French, Spanish, and Dutch fleets, were to have formed a junction, for the purpose of conveying an army to Ireland. But the two victories, gained by Admirals Duncan and Jervis, frustrated their plans, and compelled them to postpone, at least, their designs upon that country.

While the spirit of rebellion thus raged in Ireland; while the laws were publicly reviled and violated; while magistrates, jurors, and

witnesses, were assassinated at noon day; and while a system of terror was enforced by the rebels, as severe in principle, and as operative in effect, as that which had prevailed in France since the destruction of the Monarchy; the English and Irish oppositions seemed to vie with each other in misrepresenting the causes of this state of things; in endeavouring to palsy the energy of government; and in imparting, by their inflammatory speeches, vigour to disaffection, and encouragement to revolt. Lord Moira and Mr. Grattan, the one in England the other in Ireland, had even ventured to impute the rebellious spirit to the very measures which were adopted to suppress it. His Lordship was so far deceived, by the misrepresentations of his Irish informants, that he had not the smallest notion that his own domain was the very scene of rebellion, and the spot chosen by the rebels for concealing a large quantity of their instruments of murder. He could descry no outrages but in the troops who were sent to oppose the rebels; and either so inveterate was his Lordship's prejudice, or so erroneous his information, that facts, notorious to every one else, wholly escaped his observation; while others, of a different nature, acquired an opposite colour and complexion from those which they exhibited to the eyes of common observers.

Mr. Fox, in his speech on the motion of Mr. Grey, on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, in the spring of 1797, had carried misrepresentation to a much greater extent. He asked, by what means the seditious societies in Ireland had increased from a small number to an hundred thousand men; and who had been the converts and proselytes who had swelled their numbers to so gigantic a size?—And he thus answered his own question, "Obviously, the men who had no such desire, no such feelings, no such design originally; obviously the persons who had no other objects in view, in all the petitions which they presented, and in all the applications which they made, than Catholic Emancipation and Reform of Parliament. This is admitted by the Report."—Most certain it is, that the Report of the Secret Committees of the Irish Parliament admitted no such thing. It admitted, indeed, what was well known to be the fact, that the seditious societies *professed* to have no other object; but the insincerity of such professions was too obvious to impose even

on the most credulous. Mr. Fox, however, proceeded to state, that "the spirit of reform spread over the country; they made humble, earnest, and repeated applications to the *Castle* for redress, but *there* they found *a fixed determination to resist every claim.** They made their application to all the eminent and considerable characters in the country, who had, on former occasions, distinguished themselves in the popular cause. But, unfortunately, they were so alarmed by the French Revolution, and by the cry set up by Ministers, of the danger of infection, that they could not listen to the complaint. What was the consequence? These bodies of men, who found it in vain to expect redress from the government of the Castle, or from the Parliament, and having no where else to recur to, joined the societies, whom the Report accused of cherishing the desires of separation from England; and they imbibed and became converts to those notions of frantic ambition which the Report laid to their charge, and which threatened consequences so dreadful and alarming, that no man could contemplate them without horror and dismay."

So far was this representation from the fact, that not one in a hundred of the United Irishmen ever joined in a petition for Parliamentary Reform; or ever considered a Reform but as a short step gained on the road to Revolution. Even when a motion for Reform was made, in the Irish Parliament, in the spring of 1794, the member who seconded the motion was heard to observe, that he and his friends had so little encouragement from the public, that they only brought the business forward from a regard to their own consistency,—"For," said he, "how can we hope to succeed, when we are not supported by *a single petition.*" †

* When it is remembered that this bold assertion was advanced in 1797, after every concession, compatible with the existence of the Constitution, had been made by the government, who had even gone beyond the *ultimatum* of the Catholic Committee, as published by themselves, it will not be considered unjust to remark, that Mr. Fox made no scruple to sacrifice truth at the shrine of party.

† Knox's Essays on Ireland, p. 178.

That *Reform* was only desirable as the means of facilitating a revolution, was acknowledged by several of the rebels themselves. Dr. Drennan, the organ of the United Irishmen, in his letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, observed, that *any kind of Reform*, sincerely put into execution, would do *much* to *please*, but *not* to SATISFY, the people. *Any* Reform once made, would make EVERY *Reform* afterwards more easy; when adopted, it would tend to perfect itself. It may walk on as Catholic Emancipation, from *gradual* to TOTAL;" in other words, from *Reform* to *Revolution*. Mr. Erskine had observed, in his memorable pamphlet on the war, speaking of the Irish societies, that, " It is demonstrated, that a design to reform the abuses in the government is not at all connected with disloyalty to its establishment." * But Mr. Erskine, whose sources of information were certainly not the most pure, or the most correct, and who exhibited not the smallest proof of having taken sufficient pains, in the knowledge which they afforded, to separate truth from falsehood, was flatly contradicted by the Report of the Committee of the Irish House of Lords, which was founded on the depositions of persons, taken on oath before them. It is there stated, that, " the demand for a Reform, and the Catholic Emancipation, were held out merely as a pretence for the associations, and with a desire to seduce persons, who were not acquainted with their traitorous designs, to unite with them." † And what renders the validity of this statement indisputable, and puts an end to all farther doubt or cavil on the question, is the testimony of Dr. M'Nevin himself, who acknowledged that he had seen a resolution of the Leinster Provincial Committee of 19th of February, 1798, " that they would not be diverted from their purpose *by any thing which could be done in Parliament*, as nothing short of the total emancipation of their country would satisfy them;" evidently meaning that they would continue in rebellion till they had succeeded in separating Ireland from the British Crown, and in establishing an independent Republic on the ruins of the existing Monarchy. And when

* View of the Causes and Consequences of the War with France. Edition 31. p. 16.

† Lord's Reports, p. 2.

the Doctor was farther asked, " Do you think the mass of the people in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, care the value of this pen, or the drop of ink it contains, for *Parliamentary Reform*, or *Catholic Emancipation?*" He immediately answered,—" I AM SURE THEY DO NOT." * Being asked, how he accounted for the cruelties exercised by the Rebels on *Protestants*, he answered, " The lower order of Catholics consider *Protestant* and *Englishman* as synonimous, and as their natural enemy;—the same Irish word—*Sassena*—signifies both." When the question was put to Mr. Emmet, a Barrister, another of the rebels, whether he thought the mass of the people cared for Parliamentary Reform, or Catholic Emancipation, his answer was,—" I believe the mass of the people do not care a feather for Catholic Emancipation; neither did they care for Parliamentary Reform, till it was explained to them as leading to other objects which they looked to, principally the abolition of Tithes. I am sure, if Tithes were abolished, the people, on taking new leases, would be obliged to pay more in proportion for lands than the value they now pay for tithes—my wish was to destroy the present Established Church, and to have no Church-establishment. The people were also taught to consider that when they became members of a democracy, their condition would be bettered." He afterwards stated, that certainly the revolutionary government did not intend to have any ecclesiastical establishment. Mr. Oliver Bond, another of the United Irishmen, confirmed the testimony of his associates, by stating that " Catholic Emancipation was a mere pretence," that the people did not care for Parliamentary Reform; that a paper, called the Press, established and conducted by Arthur O'Connor, was set up to " forward the cause of the union," a " principal object of which," was to abolish all ecclesiastical establishments.

The Opposition, however, shut their eyes against conviction, and obstinately persisted in ascribing the disturbances in Ireland to the oppressions of government. Mr. Fox took the lead on these subjects, and by his speeches, both in the House of Commons, and at the Whig Club, contributed, in no small degree, to keep the flame of rebellion

* Report of the Secret Committee of the Lords in 1798. App. 31. p. 278.

alive in Ireland. So violent and inflammatory, indeed, were some of the Parliamentary harangues, on this dangerous topic, that it was deemed necessary to exclude strangers from both Houses, during the discussions. Lord Moira, after having, in the winter of 1797, expatiated largely on the loyalty of the Irish people, the severity of the government, and the cruelty of the troops, repaired to Ireland, at the commencement of the following year; and, on the 19th of February, delivered his sentiments, to the same effect, in the Irish House of Lords. He was there destined, however, to meet an adversary, who, powerful in argument, but still more strong in facts and proofs, was enabled to expose the fallacy of his information, to correct his misrepresentations, and to destroy the whole fabric of error, composed, as it was, of sandy materials, which the credulity of a generous and unsuspecting mind had been led to employ, as possessing firmness and stability. The speech, in answer to his Lordship, by the Irish Chancellor, Lord Clare, contains a succinct, but luminous, account of the origin and progress of the Irish rebellion. It forms a most important historical document; and will remain, for the instruction of posterity, not only as a masterly display of manly and impressive eloquence, but as a monument of genuine patriotism. In reference to Lord Moira's speech in the House of Lords, he asked on what principle did his Lordship propose an address of a British House of Parliament, calling upon the Crown to interpose its paternal influence in a matter solely cognizable by an Irish Parliament, in the repeal of a law of Ireland of fundamental import to the Irish Constitution? On what principle did he state that the feudal tyranny of the *Corfeu* * had been established in that country; that the

* In his speech of November 22, 1797, in the British House of Peers, Lord Moira made this statement.—"One night, after *nine o'clock*, a party of soldiers saw a light in a house by the road side—they went and ordered it to be extinguished immediately: the people of the house begged that the light might be suffered to remain, because there was a child, belonging to the family, in convulsion fits, who must expire for want of help, if the people were to be without fire and candle. *But this request had* NO EFFECT." Nothing can shew the magnitude and extent of the imposition which had been practised upon the generous nature of this nobleman, who has a mind too honourable to be subjected, for a moment, to the imputation of having become a voluntary instrument for the propagation of calumny, than the strange inaccuracy

horrible practices of the Inquisition had been put in force; that the natives had been put to the torture to force a confession of their own supposed crimes, or the guilt of their neighbours? Lord Clare professed his ignorance of the principle, but observed, with concern, that these exaggerations had passed uncontroverted through every seditious newspaper of Great Britain and Ireland.

His Lordship truly observed, that it was too much the custom in both countries to drown truth and reason in noise and clamour. Lord Moira had imputed the treasonable system which had existed in Ireland to the erroneous conduct of the British government; and proposed as the grand remedy for all the distractions of the country, a system of, what he called, *conciliation*. Lord Clare proceeded to ask what security Lord Moira could give for the effects of such a system? He prophecied that it would be successful, but what pledge was there for the accomplishment of his presage?—Did he reason from the past?—The past was against him. If conciliation were a spell to allay clamour and

of this statement, which was, indeed, directly contrary to the truth. The following is the correct account of the transaction to which his Lordship here referred.

"Lieutenant STEEL, of the Cambridgeshire light dragoons, was the officer who commanded the piquet guard on the night when the transaction, which had been so grossly and wickedly misrepresented, (*to* Lord Moira) occurred. He had been his first round with the *horse* piquet, and was out with the *foot about eleven o'clock*, when, on going to the door of a house where there was a light and fire, the light was put out. The officer inquired of the people of the house for what purpose they had the light, and why they now extinguished it? A woman told him, that she had heard no lights were to be kept after nine or ten o'clock, and that her child was dangerously ill.—He immediately desired she would re-light her candle; informed her that no one would again call at her house; and, on his return to the piquet, gave the necessary orders to the serjeant and men, that she should not be disturbed. On passing the following morning, Lieutenant STEEL saw a woman at the door, and inquired after the child—she thanked him, but said she feared it could not recover.

"In his report to the commanding officer the next day, Lieutenant STEEL remarked, that he had not extinguished the lights, as the inhabitants wanted them for various purposes—watching their gardens, and the linen while bleaching, which they do alternately; also for the attendance on the sick, and the nursing of children."

discontent, in no place in the globe had it had so fair an experiment as in the kingdom of Ireland. The Chancellor called upon Lord Moira to meet him on this very ground—that, from the year 1779, to that very day, the system of the British Cabinet had been a system of conciliation to that country; and that no nation of Europe had, within the same time, advanced to equal prosperity with the kingdom of Ireland. In the year 1779, when Lord Moira was engaged in the discharge of an honourable duty in another part of the globe, (America) there were restraints upon the commerce of Ireland; Parliament addressed the Throne, and the British acts which operated to restrain Irish commerce were immediately repealed. And his Lordship, very opportunely, reminded the House, that the very persons who now professed themselves to be the most forward advocates of Irish emancipation, and were now in the practice of making Irish grievances a subject of continual debate in the British Parliament, expressed, in 1779, the most unqualified disapprobation of the measure proposed for relaxing the restraints which affected the Irish commerce;—and they were the very same men who were now the advocates of Irish traitors.

In a very short time after this concession, the voice of complaint was again heard; grievances were clamoured on every side; they were brought forward in Parliament by the leading patriots of the day, and a majority of the House of Commons had the presumption to resist their demands. Then, for the first time, was an appeal made from Parliament to the armed majesty of the people; and every man who presumed to hesitate upon the subject in question was denounced as an enemy to his country, by that candid, impartial, and august tribunal. The British Cabinet, however, took steps to conciliate. The Duke of Portland, (who was then Viceroy) called upon the country to state what its grievances were. After such a step, some respite might have been expected;—the answer to his address was settled by the opposition cabinet of Ireland, so that the leaders of the popular cause were the very persons who settled what measures of conciliation would satisfy the country. That measure was restricted by them to a repeal of the usurped claim of the British Parliament, to bind Ireland by its acts, and a perpetual mutiny bill. The Duke of Portland promised for his

Majesty that he would assent to their desires. Lord Clare declared he was justified in saying, that these grievances were brought forward by Opposition, as *the only matters of which the country could complain;* for not only were they stated in an amendment, moved to the address to the Throne, and agreed to by the House of Commons; but, in that amendment, the Opposition undertook to point out all the grievances of the country, and *pledged themselves that no future difficulty should arise between the two kingdoms;* and for this pledge the House of Commons voted the enormous sum of £50,000 to the gentleman (Mr. Grattan) who had taken on him the office of finding out those grievances, *as a reward for the final settlement of all dissentions.* These concessions were received with unbounded applause, and their authors were the idols of the nation for *about three weeks.*

This uncontradicted statement of the Chancellor's, exhibits in the strongest point of view, the factious conduct of the Irish Opposition;—an Opposition originating in the most sordid and selfish motives of mortified pride, thwarted ambition, and disappointed avarice; and conducted with a degree of virulence, and with a systematic pertinaciousness, which rendered the mask of patriotism, which was, as usual, assumed to disguise their real principles and objects, more odious and ridiculous. It appeared from this statement, that the Opposition themselves, at the period in question, declared every existing grievance to be removed, and in a manner pledged themselves, at least by direct implication, to remain satisfied with the concessions already made by the government, and to prefer no further claims. Yet from that period to the present, with very short intervals of inactivity, have these same politicians continued to amuse themselves, and to disturb the country, with fresh claims, and with importunate demands for new concessions. So slender is the reliance to be placed in the declarations of *Patriots by profession*; and so little the advantage to be gained from hasty and inconsiderate concessions by a government.

Lord Clare proceeded to give a brief and succinct history of this system. He observed, that a gentleman of great political sagacity, meaning Mr. Flood, discovered the insufficiency of a repeal of the

British Act, declaring the right of the British Legislature to bind Ireland, and that an express renunciation of the right itself was necessary. This instantly became the universal opinion, and the very men, who had three weeks before been the popular idols, were now the objects of obloquy and contempt, and exposed not only to insult, but to personal danger; to such a pitch of violence were the people driven by their political anger!—At the same time, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of one thousand, were utterly ignorant of the distinction between *simple repeal and renunciation*; and would, his Lordship ventured to say, have been as easily led to vociferate against renunciation, as they were against simple repeal; and would have holden it as much in abhorrence, without knowing wherefore, had it answered the purposes of those who set them on. The experience of these facts, and the peril to which even their lives were exposed, ought, Lord Clare contended, to have taught these politicians the hazard of appealing to an armed multitude upon questions of abstract grievances.—The majesty of the people soon discovered another grievance; the army having been, of necessity, sent from Ireland, the Duke of Portland, from a principle of economy, raised four provincial regiments, officered by men who were to derive no military rank from their situation, and to be of no expence to the nation after the war. The name of *Fencibles* was new in the country, a clamour was raised against the establishment, and the Duke of Portland became as much an object of abuse as any other man with whom they chose to be offended. Had he raised four regiments of the line, and burthened the nation with an expensive half-pay list, nothing would have been said; but this act of economy was taken as a most outrageous insult upon an independent nation.

His Lordship then adverted to the first administration of Lord Buckingham, to the revived clamour respecting the necessity of an absolute renunciation of all right of legislating for Ireland, on the part of Great Britain, and to the act which was passed for that purpose. Thus gratified in every wish, the patriots of Ireland might have suspended their labour, but this was not to happen;—they soon discovered that the Parliament, which had procured all these advantages, was in itself a grievance, and, being armed, they thought that the most constitutional

mode of redressing grievances was to assemble, in a military convention, in the metropolis. Accordingly, in the year 1783, a military convention did meet in Dublin, decked in all the forms of a Parliament; they had their Speaker and their Committees; a bill for the reform of the House of Commons was brought in, read, debated, read a second time, committed, reported, and ordered to be engrossed;—read a third time, passed, and sent, by two of their number, who happened to have seats in the House of Commons, to be registered by Parliament. It was declared at this time, by the Minister of the day, (Mr. Fox) now a leader of Opposition, as his opinion to Lord Northington, *that the existence of Ireland, as a member of the British empire, depended upon his dispersing that armed Convention.* Parliament, however, vindicated its honour; the bill thus brought in on the point of the bayonet was indeed offered to the House of Commons; but the House treated this act of contumacious folly with the contempt which it deserved. It was driven from the House, and its authors, ashamed of their conduct, quietly shrunk back to their different counties.

In consequence of this firm conduct, Ireland remained quiet for about a year, before it was discovered that British manufactures, by their superior quality and cheapness, obtained a preference in the Irish market. Instead of setting about to rival them in quality or cheapness, or at all considering that the balance of trade, between Ireland and Great Britain, was infinitely in favour of the former, it was immediately resolved to commence a war of prohibitory duties against England, although it was proved, decisively, that there was not wool enough in Ireland to clothe one-half of its inhabitants. To conciliate and quiet these claims, Great Britain, in 1785, offered a fair and liberal commercial treaty to Ireland, by which she admitted the Irish to her markets, and shared her immense capital with them, and opened her colonies to their trade, on condition that they should follow England in the laws which she had made for the regulation of those colonies, and of that trade in which they were to participate. This, however, was represented, by the sensitive patriots of the soil, as a new attack upon Irish independence, and, so great was the outcry raised against it, that the Parliament of Ireland, in their wisdom, thought fit to reject the treaty, and, duped by the silliest deception that

ever was practised on any set of men, lost an opportunity of consolidating the interests of the Empire. There was now some respite from political agitation for two or three years, and his Lordship called upon every man who heard him to say, whether the kingdom did not, during that period, advance in prosperity to a degree till then unexampled.

At the period of the regency Lord Clare remarked, that the Parliament of Ireland, influenced by the same persons who had supported all these clamours, acted with the most marked hostility towards the British Parliament; and he declared his opinion, that the rash, intemperate, and *illegal*, conduct of that period, on the question of the regency, shook the Constitution to its foundation, and was the primary cause of every subsequent disaster.

The persons who had, on that occasion, signed the memorable *Round Robin*, and had afterwards been dismissed from office, combining with the old demagogues, formed themselves into a political club for the redress of grievances. They began by a Manifesto, charging the British government with a systematic design to destroy the liberty of Ireland; and they proclaimed that the basis of their institution was a resolution to maintain, with their lives and fortunes, the Constitution as settled at the Revolution of 1688, and re-asserted in Ireland in 1782. The leading objects of reform, which these Tavern-Legislators deemed necessary for the salvation of the country, were the appointment of three Commissioners of the revenue; the separation of the Board of Accounts from that of Stamps; a Pension Bill; and a Responsibility Bill. Lord Clare proved the absurdity of these proposed regulations; and observed that, if the Pension Bill had passed, an appropriated sum of £80,000 a year would have been given, absolutely, to the Crown, when no other part of the revenue was appropriated, and the Responsibility Bill went to establish, in Ireland, an Executive Directory of five officers independent of the Crown.

The debates which these measures produced in Parliament were carried on with so much coarse, intemperate, foul, and useless, invective, the parties charging each other so familiarly with faction and corruption,

that the people gave both sides credit, full credit for the villainous charges exhibited against each other;* and, with minds poisoned by the clamours of this political club, and inflamed by their calumnies into hatred of the British name, were ready to become the instruments of every political club which would incite them by the same kind of clamours, and, accordingly, very readily disposed to follow the pestilent society of United Irishmen. That pestilent association, which had reduced Ireland to a state of cannibal barbarism, little short of the horrors of 1641, began its career, as the Whig Club had done, by a Manifesto, not against any Administration, but against the British name; not to counteract the existing Minister, to favour the Administration of the Duke of Portland, of Lord Lansdowne, of Mr. Fox, or of Lord Moira himself, should he get into power, but to rouse up the indignation of Ireland against the British connection, and against British power, under any shape which it might possibly assume. Lord Clare referred to a confidential dispatch from the founder of this society, then on the Continent, to his friends at Belfast, in which the design of the association was avowed to be the separation of Ireland from England, by French assistance. A circumstance was mentioned by his Lordship, which placed the pusillanimity of the Irish government in a very disgraceful point of view;—a nest of conspirators was suffered to continue in Dublin, and, notwithstanding his repeated remonstrances, their sittings had continued nearly three years before the magistrates *were suffered* to disperse them.† At length, however, government became sensible of the danger, and, by a due exertion of authority, put a stop to the attempt.

* *Speech of the Right Honourable John, Earl of Clare, Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, in the House of Lords, in Ireland, Monday, February* 19, 1798, *on a motion made by the Earl of Moira, for an Address to the Viceroy, to adopt conciliatory measures for allaying apprehension and discontent. Dublin printed, London re-printed,* 1798, p. 10.

† If these assemblies were illegal, as the Chancellor seems to have had no doubt they were, it was the duty of the magistrates to disperse them, nor could they, consistently with their oaths, have allowed any interposition of superior authority to deter them from the discharge of that duty. And, on the other hand, if the government really interposed its authority for such a purpose, the Ministers were highly culpable, and deserved to be impeached, for interrupting the due course of justice.

It appeared, from the report of the Secret Committee of the Irish Lords, in 1793, which, on the motion of Lord Clare, had been read, that no pains were left unemployed for the seduction of the troops, and that a gentleman of rank, honour, respectability, and worth, who was a colonel in the army, had been applied to, so early as the year 1792, to accept a commission in the Revolutionary Army.—The persons who applied to him observed, that they had a sufficiency of men, arms, and money, but that they wanted officers of experience to discipline them. His Lordship then adverted to the means adopted for separating the body of the Catholics from their own gentry and nobility; their abuse of the late Lord Kenmare, for presuming to recommend the observance of a legal and peaceable conduct; and the consequent establishment of an Executive Committee, some of whom were, at this time, members of the Irish Directory, and connected with their brethren in France. In order to furnish themselves with arms, with more expedition, and at a cheaper rate, they set the Catholics upon the scheme of robbing the Protestants of their arms; and they held correspondence, through their Secretary, with the men about to be tried for breaking open houses and taking arms; and all this passed long before any one of the laws of which these persons affected to complain, and to which Lord Moira seemed to attribute their excesses, was enacted.

Lord Clare took a view of the Gunpowder and Convention Acts, which had been so strongly reprobated by the Opposition; shewed to what they were indebted for their origin; and what evils they were meant to suppress;—clearly demonstrating, that, so far from having been the cause of the conspiracy, they arose from the incontrovertible proof of its existence and acts, previous to their having been enacted. These laws, however, proved inadequate to prevent the secret machinations of these domestic traitors, who converted those counties, in which their influence was best established, into a scene of murder and robbery: no loyal, peaceful man could sit securely by his fire-side; the first salute, or notice, which he received of the attack upon his house was usually a volley of musquetry about his ears, fired in through his windows; and if this failed to drive him out of his house, it was customary to set fire to the house, that he might be forced out for assassination.

In order to restrain these outrages, an act was passed, in 1796, by which government was enabled, if the majority of the magistrates of a county should require it, to declare any district, represented by them as in a state of disturbance, out of the King's peace, and to establish, in such district, a sort of military government. By that law, the taking of unlawful oaths was made a transportable felony, and the tendering of them a capital crime; for the means by which the union had acted, and continued to act, was by an oath to keep secrecy, and to obey the commands of their leaders.

This law was not carried into effect for a considerable time; it was first enforced, in the county of Armagh, without regard to persons or party; and it would soon have succeeded in restoring tranquillity, but for the approaching period of a general election. The magistrates of the county for election purposes, ranged themselves under the different parties of Orangemen and Defenders; and the Chancellor declared, that, if he could have procured a sufficient number of gentlemen of that county to execute the office of magistrate, who had not taken one part or the other, he would have issued a new commission of the peace for the county of Armagh, omitted every one of the existing magistrates; but, unfortunately, he could not procure them.

Lord Clare proceeded to state the constitution of the United Irishmen, in order to prove the impracticability to counteract their projects, by the means of ordinary laws. The lower, or primary, societies, consisting of the lower class of society, were formed into clubs of not more than thirty each; when they amounted to that number, they divided into new societies, which, in their cant, were *organized*, and provided with the necessary officers; when the number of these societies in a barony became sufficient for the purpose, a society was elected from amongst them, to preside over the affairs of the barony, and to be the channel of communication between the primary societies and their superiors.—From the baronial committees, when amounting to a sufficient number, were formed county committees, which, in the same manner, produced provincial committees, immediately connected with their Executive Directory, and with the lowest societies of THE UNION. By this sort of

system, the Executive Directory of the Union governed its operations with more vigour than even the ability of Lord Moira could diffuse through the most regular army which he ever had under his command. The communications were made through their respective Secretaries, either verbally, or by detached papers, which, when they were fully understood, were so immediately cancelled, that it was wonderful that so many of them should have been discovered. In this way the commands of the Executive Directory were communicated through the provincial, county, and baronial, secretaries, to the lowest ranks of this pestilent UNION. When there was such an invisible power, operating by invisible means, how was a regular government to oppose, by the slow formalities of municipal law, the promptness of such an enemy; a promptness which no government had hitherto been found to attain.

The Chancellor asked Lord Moira, when he talked of conciliation, *whom* they were to conciliate? Was it the Revolutionary Government, the Executive Directory of Ireland, which held as regular a correspondence with France as the Lord Lieutenant did with England? "I will tell the noble Earl,"—said his Lordship,—"that they are not to be conciliated; that they would no more treat with the noble Earl than they would with me; that they consider themselves secure of French aid, and of the support of the lower orders, whom they have seduced by the hope of plunder, and the promise of an Agrarian distribution of the land.—Does the noble Earl know to what frenzy this Union has carried the greater part of the lower order; that they have taken an oath of secrecy, which, to violate, is certain death; that they are bound to obey the orders of their governors, even to the assassination of their dearest friend or most beloved companion; that, by their unrelenting barbarity, they have spread universal horror and dismay through the country; that every witness who has dared to appear against them has been written down in *the book of death*; that magistrates have been murdered; that, even in the courts of justice, jurymen have been threatened with the fate of these witnesses and magistrates, and desired to look to them as to their own lot, should they dare to punish a member of the UNION."—In the preceding summer, a circular hand-bill had been published, and sent through the North of Ireland, cautioning juries not to convict a *brother*;

and the general sentiment promulgated, by their committee, was, that no crime committed to forward the objects of the Union was blameable; nay, that every such act was pardonable in the eyes of God and man.

Lord Clare then read the plan of the Union as drawn up by its founder, Tone, which he justly compared with the German Union, described by Professor Robison; and observed, that, if the principle of a school might be fairly gathered from the sentiments of the teacher, the design of the Irish UNION might be fully collected from the avowed sentiments of Mr. Tone, who had again and again acknowledged it to be separation from England, and the establishment of an Irish Republic connected with France. To accomplish that laudable purpose, had witnesses, magistrates, and jurors, been murdered, the rabble armed, pikes made and distributed, barbarities committed, at which even France might blush, and attempts made to corrupt the King's troops to desert their colours, and rob their Sovereign; public justice had been eluded, insulted, and trampled upon, and a power established paramount to the law. Lord Clare expressed his regret that Lord Moira had not resided in the country, and formed his opinions from his own observations; for, if he had, he would willingly leave the decision to his acknowledged honour and integrity. He related the case of Dr. Hamilton, a clergyman of the Established Church, who was obliged, for several months, to have his house, in the North of Ireland, garrisoned against the Insurgents. This gentleman, who was a man of amiable manners and exemplary humanity, having been unhappily delayed at a ferry which lay in his way home, and having gone to the neighbouring house of an old college friend, Dr. Waller, was watched and marked for murder by these barbarians. While he sate round the fire with his hosts, a volley of musquetry was fired into the windows, which laid Mrs. Waller dead at her husband's feet;—the terrified servants were forced, for self-preservation, to give up their unhappy guest to the fury of the brotherhood; and that worthy gentleman was mangled and slaughtered, with circumstances of cruelty too horrible even for Indian savages to hear.—And yet these were men to be conciliated by fair words and soothing promises;—these were the injured innocents whose fine feelings were tempered to conciliation? Lord Moira was asked if he had heard of the murder of Dr. Knipe, who was murdered

within twenty miles of the capital ;—of Mr. Comyn, butchered within a few miles of his own seat, at Ballinahinch, for the crime of having enrolled himself for the defence of his country, and having dared to accept a commission under his King. Had he heard of Mr. Butler's assassination, another Protestant clergyman, murdered by the UNION ? Had he read the dark and bloody catalogue of murder, which was a disgrace to the country ; and would he contend that, while an invisible power of darkness was dealing destruction round the country, government was to rest upon its arms, and temporize with treason until the massacre was completed ?—Lord Clare told Lord Moira he would supply him with some materials for the formation of a correct opinion on the state of the country. Mr. Conolly, who spent a large fortune in the country ; who, at his house of Castletown, lived in a state of hospitality, by which hundreds were supported, discovered, in the summer of 1797, a conspiracy within the walls of his own house, to murder him and his amiable lady ;—a lady whose whole life had been devoted to the service of her fellow-creatures, whose humanity and charity had been incessant in their activity, who was the mother, the patroness, the benefactress, of the whole country around her ; whose virtues were as far above praise as they were universal in their exercise ;—yet even she was to fall before the fury of the Union. Her husband, who had toiled through a long and honourable life for the advantage of his country, was to be murdered along with her, and their house delivered up to a band of ruffians. This was to be done by the very wretches who lived upon their bounty, who were so abandoned to the purposes of the Union as not to shrink even from the murder of their friend and their benefactress. Lord Clare stated that he paid a visit at Castletown soon after, when he found that hospitable mansion in a state of regular fortification. After sun-set, the doors were all barred and chained, and a *chevaux de frise* was planted round them, and a regular guard of soldiers was mounted in the house. And yet, with all this precaution, Lady Louisa assured his Lordship, that she was afraid to suffer him, or any one else, to sleep on the ground flour. After this statement, Lord Moira was, very appositely, asked, whether he expected the gentlemen of Ireland would tamely lie down and hold out their necks to the knife of the assassins, and give up their families, their property, their country, without an effort for their preservation ?

Having pursued this line of argument for some time, and having proved, by the instructions to General Lake, that government, even when forced, for self-preservation, to have recourse to coercive measures, had acted with all the lenity and forbearance which the circumstances of the case would allow;—and having, consequently, demonstrated the injustice of Lord Moira's accusations, he informed his Lordship, that his own town of Ballinahinch was *one of the rankest citadels of treason in the kingdom.* Lord Moira had informed the House, that he had assembled the people of that town, and, after he had unfolded to them the mischiefs of republicanism, the virtues of the King, and the good qualities of the Heir-Apparent; he read their loyalty in their eyes, and it was expressed, without a possibility of deception, in their countenances. Lord Clare, however, referred him to the trials of some privates of the Monaghan militia, where he would find that these unfortunate men were first seduced, and sworn by one of his own tenants, in that town of Ballinahinch; that, as an inducement to them to desert their colours, and to steal their arms, commissions were given them, in that town of Ballinahinch, for the Revolutionary army;—facts proved by the solemn confession of the soldiers themselves, at the moment of their execution. That very town of Ballinahinch was summoned, by General Lake, to give up its arms;—the people refused, and it was not until they were threatened with a military force, that they did give them up, and, amongst other things, no inconsiderable quantity of pikes! "Are pikes," said Lord Clare, "arguments for reform? are pikes the emblems of loyalty to the Heir Apparent?" Lord Moira was further reminded, that his own groom and gardener, in that very town, acknowledged themselves members of the Union, and admitted that pike-handles had been concealed in his Lordship's own timber-yard, where his Lordship's own agent found traces of them. But as Lord Moira had asserted that the loyalty of Ballinahinch had been impeached only by the evidence of one man, of the name of Morgan, it was found necessary to state to the House, that this Morgan had been afterwards sent to Downpatrick for security; but that, having unfortunately ventured to quit that place, he was murdered by a party of horsemen; and that, it was ascertained, a party of men on horseback had, about that time, left the town of Ballinahinch. Within two months of this very time, the people of that town had made

two centinels drunk, and then stole from them upwards of a hundred ball-cartridges.—Such was the loyal town of Ballinahinch. Several other inaccuracies, into which Lord Moira had been betrayed by misinformation, were corrected by Lord Clare; who then put it fairly to his Lordship, whether there was not a rebellion in the country of a most desperate nature, and having a most treasonable object?—If rebellion were to be met by the slow operation of law, it was truly observed, there would soon be no law at all. This observation was made for the purpose of contrasting Lord Moira's past practice with his present theory. In the year 1781, in America, then in a state of rebellion, Isaac Haynes, an American Colonel, was taken by a patrole, and, being identified as a man who had taken the oath of allegiance, he was hanged, without further ceremony, on a charge of having attempted to corrupt the troops, by terrifying the timid and seducing the weak* And the defence made for this summary mode of punishment was, that, during the existence of an actual rebellion, to wait for the forms of law was to yield to the rebels.

What was the charge preferred against Lord Camden? That, during a rebellion in the country, the rebels having endeavoured to

* The execution of Colonel Haynes (which took place at Charles-Town, South Carolina, in the summer of 1781) was brought before the House of Lords, by the Duke of Richmond, (a member of the Opposition of that day) on the fourth of February, 1782. It was then stated, on the authority of a private letter, that Lord Rawdon, and Lieutenant-Colonel Balfour, had resolved upon his execution, for having been found under arms, and employed in raising a regiment to oppose the British government, though he had become a subject, and had accepted the protection of that government, after the reduction of Charles-Town. The Duke of Richmond stigmatized this proceeding, as *illegal*, *barbarous*, and *impolitic*.—It was defended, however, by the Lord Chancellor, as strictly legal; his Lordship maintained, that Colonel Haynes, having been taken in arms, after admission to his parole, was liable to be hanged up *instanter*, without any other form of trial than what was necessary to identify his person; and the House concurred in the justice of this opinion. When Lord Rawdon, however, returned to England, he felt so much offended at having such harsh terms applied to his conduct, (which was, unquestionably, regular, legal, and proper,) that he demanded satisfaction of the Nobleman who used them, in a very peremptory manner; nor was he satisfied, until he had received the most ample apology, which he could, himself, dictate. Yet to conduct, at least *as* legal, *as* regular, and *as* necessary, on the part of the Irish government and army, did his Lordship, at this period, not scruple to apply terms still more severe, more harsh, more unjust, and more unwarrantable. Into such inconsistencies does the spirit of party betray mankind!

corrupt the King's troops, to seduce the weak, and to terrify the timid, having manufactured pikes, stolen arms, murdered magistrates, and affrighted the country, avowing their design of waiting for foreign aid, to overthrow the Constitution, and renounce all allegiance, they were, by the order of Lord Camden, disarmed and deprived of the power of offending against the laws and peace of the country, that he might be spared the painful necessity of hanging them, like Colonel Haynes, without any form of trial.

Lord Clare stated that, in consequence of the vigorous measures of the government, and the firm conduct of General Lake, the country was fast returning to peace and comfort.—Industry began to re-appear, and manufactures to flourish; until Lord Moira made his unfortunate speech in the British Parliament, and avowed his design of going to Ireland. As soon as this was announced, the broken-spirits of the Union revived, an association was formed for the collection of grievances, a call was published to all manner of persons,—"Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and disburthen your grievances to us." This was the signal for new disturbances, and it had, unhappily, been too successful!

A report having been circulated of a probable change of Ministers, the leaders of the Union thought that a favourable opportunity for promoting their designs. A requisition was, accordingly, addressed to the Sheriff for the County of Down, desiring him to call a meeting of all the inhabitants of that *proclaimed* and *rebellious* district. And this requisition was even signed by some of the very Magistrates who had called upon the Viceroy to proclaim the county to be out of the King's peace. This illegal act, however, the Magistrates took care to prevent. But a petition was, nevertheless, carried about for signatures, and the first name subscribed to it was that of a Protestant Bishop, who did not scruple to hawk round the county a paper intended to carry a *positive falsehood* to the foot of the Throne.

In that paper it was asserted, that, in consequence of the war, the manufactures of Ireland had been destroyed; that, by a war which had laid waste the German Empire, the demand for Irish Linen had

been diminished. In opposition to this assertion, the Chancellor stated, from authority, that the average of linen exported for four years, immediately preceding the war, was NINE millions four hundred thousand pounds in value ; and the average for the first four years of the war was ELEVEN millions two hundred thousand pounds ; so that the country, which was so confidently affirmed to be ruined in its manufactures by the war, had absolutely gained to the amount of near TWO millions upon the average. In the year 1796, THREE millions were exported,—a greater export than had ever been known since the first establishment of the manufacture. But the secret of the mistake was simply this ;—the party in England had made the same complaint, and it was necessary for their friends in Ireland to follow them, right or wrong. In the year 1797 (a great portion of which had passed since the petition in question) there was a great decrease, indeed, of the Linen trade ; but the petitioners neglected to state the true reason of it. They did not state that the northern weaver had given up the shuttle for the pike ; that they had abandoned their sober habits of industry and religion for midnight outrage and traitorous associations ; and that they had degenerated from manufacturers into murderers.—These were the means by which the manufactures, the comforts, and the tranquillity of the country, had been destroyed.

In answer to the assertion, that the trade of Belfast had been reduced to *one-fifteenth*, it was proved, by the returns of the Customs, that the only reduction which it had experienced, was from £92,000 to £85,000 ! And it appeared that, so far from the war having injured the trade of Ireland, Ireland was the only country, in Europe, which had profited by the war. In the Southern parts of Ireland, where the people had long remained loyal, and where, in consequence, tranquillity had not been interrupted, industry flourished, and trade prospered.—But this happiness was not suffered to be of long duration, for when the French had attempted to invade the country in 1796, they found such a disposition to resist them, that, on their return, they reproached Mr. Tone with the deception which he had practised upon them, in the assurance that the whole country would rise at their approach, and hasten to join their standard. Tone promised to correct this mistake ; he, accordingly, sent a

strong remonstrance to the leaders of the Union, on the necessity of immediately *organizing* the South; and they succeeded but too well in their efforts for the accomplishment of this diabolical purpose.

A petition for a change of Ministers had been circulated in the County of Kildare, and the name of a lame Mendicant was one of the first affixed to it. A Peer had passed a whole day in procuring signatures in the little town of Leixlip, and devoted two hours to shake the obstinacy of a Blacksmith, his apprentice, journeyman, and labourer, and to add their names to the list. It was truly remarked, by the Chancellor, that it was hardly possible that the country should be otherwise than disturbed, when disturbances were encouraged by such paltry artifices in men of rank, who used those means to enforce one set of men into, and another set of men out of, the Cabinet of Great Britain.

But, a few days previous to this debate, in the Irish Parliament, the following order, of the Executive Directory of the UNION, was issued.—"United Irishmen, your numbers are now so much increased, that you may justly be called the people; but your organization must increase with your numbers, for, without it, how can your strength be brought to act?—Consider what a time this is; when France has, after overcoming all the powers of Europe, marched all her troops to her coasts for the invasion of Great Britain and Ireland, to meet men arrayed in the cause of liberty, and anxious to receive them. Great Britain, falling into bankruptcy and ruin; this is the moment for you to exert yourselves; unite and organize, and, ere long, you must be free." And this order was immediately followed by another, enjoining the Union to meet in bodies of not more than five or six, to wear no particular uniform, to wait in confidence for the time when they would receive assistance from the armies of France, and they must succeed.

Before he concluded his luminous sketch of the passing times, the Chancellor noticed a new revolutionary engine, to which the Irish Insurgents had lately had recourse. When it was found that the protection afforded to the witnesses, magistrates, and jurors, ensured, and established, the operation of the laws, a scheme was devised to abuse the

administeration of justice.* Every man concerned in that administration was held up as the most corrupt, tyrannical, and profligate, of characters; the truth was perverted, the most scandalous misrepresentations were made of the conduct of the Courts, and the whole force of the Union was bent to propagate these falsehoods. This was most flagrantly the case with respect to William Orr, one of the most active Members of the Union, who was executed at Carrickfergus, on the 14th of October, 1797.† This man was indicted for endeavouring to seduce two soldiers from their duty and allegiance: the names of the men, Wheatly and Lindsey, had been found in a list of the *Union*, seized upon a Committee in the act of sitting. The men were apprehended; they confessed the crime, and each of them, distinctly, and separately, charged Orr as the secretary of the meeting at which they were sworn. They named several persons who were present, not one of whom was brought to disprove their allegations; and, although a witness was brought to impeach the credit of Wheatly, his evidence was of such an incredible nature, that the Judge did not think it necessary to take it down in his note-book. No attempt was made to discredit the other witness, and Orr was found guilty by a Jury, who, at the same time, though repeatedly cautioned to re-consider their verdict, recommended him to mercy. A motion was made in arrest of judgment. An account of the Trial was printed, which, to the disgrace of the profession, Lord Clare said, mutilated and garbled as it was, was obviously produced under the inspection of a Barrister. By that account of the motion in arrest of judgment, the country was given to understand, that Orr was tried under a Statute which had expired, although there were several other counts in the indictment, had it been possible to suppose that the insurrection act was not in force. The motion was overruled, and, after it had been so disposed of, a counsel, who wore the King's gown, went

* This scheme was first carried into execution in the English Parliament, where the Members of the Opposition did not blush to revile the Judges of Scotland, for presuming to convict and punish persons guilty of treasonable and seditious practices, in conformity with the laws of the country.

† His brother, Samuel Orr, was afterwards hanged as a Rebel.

into court, and exhibited an affidavit, in which it was stated that the jury were drunk. And, when asked why he did this, he answered, that his object was to move for an attachment against the jury ;—but the real object of its introduction, said the Chancellor, was to slander the administration of justice, and for no other purpose. The noble and learned judge, as was his duty, transmitted the recommendation of the jury to government ;—but when asked if he concurred in it, he declared that he could not.

Affidavits were then made and transmitted to the Viceroy to impeach the conduct of the jury ; but although the report alluded to contained an account of an affidavit tending to discredit the witness, *it is most certain that no such affidavit was ever laid* before the Lord Lieutenant. Upon such grounds as these the execution of this rebel had been held out as a murder, and, at a drunken meeting, at a tavern in London, a member of the English Parliament was said to have given, as a toast, " The memory of William Orr, basely murdered ;" and, it was also said, that another worthy gentleman, with equal zeal and delicacy, at the same meeting, gave, as a bumper toast, " May the Lord Lieutenant, and the Irish Cabinet, be seen in the situation of William Orr."—The object of all this was very plain ; if the sources of public justice were thus poisoned, its administration would soon become impracticable. Lord Clare adverted to the profligate speech of an Irish barrister, who, he said, deserved the pillory, in which he had the audacity to support this same calumny, and to utter a foul libel on public justice, in its very sanctuary.

The Chancellor observed, that, besides the test and supremacy acts, there was but one statute which affected the Roman Catholics, as such ; that was the act which rendered a certain portion of property a necessary qualification for the keeping of arms. It was needless to dwell on the fundamental importance to the constitution of the test and supremacy laws, which extended alike to all his Majesty's subjects, or to explain how the country had flourished under their influence. The Chancellor requested Lord Moira, when he returned to England, to rise in the British House of Peers, and move for a repeal of those laws. He was afraid, however, he would not comply, and for this reason :—He

would be told that, for an attempt of the very same kind, James the Second was expelled from the Throne of England;—he would be told, that he was about to condemn the principles of the revolution, and to impeach the title of the House of Hanover. For, could any man say, that, if it were right to repeal the test and supremacy laws, James the Second, who was expelled for that attempt, was not worse used than any other Prince that ever lived?* In the memorable declaration of James, which hurled him from the Throne, would be found no very dissimilar model of the tests of the Irish Union. In that declaration the Monarch avowed, that he had brought Papists into his Privy Council for the purpose of promoting a brotherhood of affection, and a conciliation of religious differences; and it was asked, if that declaration had not been made, would the House of Hanover have now sat on the Throne of these kingdoms?

Lord Moira was called upon to disclose his panacea, his nostrum, which was to conciliate men who had broken the pledges which they had formerly given, and to ensure their fidelity; and, by the aid of which a Protestant Church was to stand against a Roman Catholic State; and the British Constitution against a Republican Democracy.—What was the principle of the British Constitution?—that the Church and State are united, and that he who attempts to separate them will shake the whole fabric.—And this was well known to the UNION; the members of which saw that the altar was a main pillar of the Throne; they, therefore, devised the scheme of reviving religious disputes, and if they could succeed in exciting animosities, they perceived that they would accomplish their purpose. Another principle of the Constitution was, that no man should exercise any of the powers of the State, who should not give a solemn proof of his allegiance to that Constitution, in Church and State, a precaution absolutely necessary to its conservation. "I know," said the Chancellor, "that amongst the Catholics are many worthy, good, and loyal men; but I know that they are so because they have not political power;—I know that it is impossible for a man to be a good Catholic without doing every thing to forward the

* Lord Clare's speech, p. 42.

interests of his Church; and I know that, to that purpose he must employ the power which he might obtain in a Protestant State. Let me remind your lordships, that this is no obsolete doctrine; that it is the basis of the present titular Bishop of Waterford's celebrated letter; that it is to be found in another letter, of another Bishop of that Church, as strongly recommended, though less incautiously expressed. I know that the moderate Catholics were displeased at the violence of Doctor Hussey; but I also know, it was his *expression*, and not his *doctrine*, of which they disapprove.

It was observed, by Lord Clare, that the act of supremacy stood in the way of the notable scheme proposed by Lord Moira; that act which connected the spiritual power of the Church of Ireland with the Crown of Great Britain. Would Lord Moira venture to address his Majesty to repeal a law which it was a question whether the King could even assent to repeal? These were difficult constitutional questions, not to be decided by the arguments of pikes, of cannons, and howitzers. The Chancellor concluded his able speech with beseeching Lord Moira, when he saw the condition to which the country had been reduced by the artifices of party, on his return to England,—as he valued the peace and happiness of Ireland,—to use his influence with the politicians of Great Britain, to dissuade them from continuing to play the game of party politics in that unfortunate country. "The noble Earl does not know the people of Ireland so well as I do; he does not know that there is not so volatile or credulous a people on the earth; that they are ready to be the dupes of any projector who will only profess good will towards them; that they will not hesitate if any man comes with a book in one hand, and a declaration in the other, to take his test, provided it professes to be for their advantage. If he knew this he would be less surprised at the melancholy influence which words and parties have with them, and he would be more anxious, than he is, to prevent the increase of so mischievous a practice." Earl Moira's motion was negatived, on a division, by *thirty-five* to *ten*.

From this speech of Lord Clare's, a better estimate may be formed of the state of Ireland, the disposition of the people, and the cause

of the dreadful disturbances which threatened the destruction of every thing which renders a country desirable, than from any other document, the reports of the Parliamentary Committees, perhaps, only excepted. The opportunities which he enjoyed for acquiring correct information; the known integrity of his character; and the high and important station which he filled, all combined to secure his testimony against those suspicions which generally attach to the evidence of partisans. The most implicit belief, therefore, may be safely given to all his statements, respecting the views and proceedings of the rebels, and the conduct of the government. Indeed, within three weeks of this discussion, on the first of February, a Provincial Committee of the rebels was holden at Shane's-Castle, at which it was declared, "that three delegates had arrived from France; that the French expedition was going forward, and was soon expected; that three delegates had been sent from the United Britons to the National Committee, and that, from that moment, they were to consider England, Scotland, and Ireland, all as one people, acting for one common cause;—that there were legislators chosen now from the three kingdoms, to act as an executive for the whole; that they were now sure of obtaining liberty though the French should never come;—that the delegates should cause the men to hold themselves in readiness, as the hour of action could not be far distant; and that they should collect the names of all their friends, and their places of residence."* This was done, and numbers of loyal men were pointed out for assassination, in two papers devoted to the rebels, the *Press*, the property of Arthur O'Connor, and the *Union Star*.†

* Report of the Secret Committee, Appendix, p. 111.

† The following short extracts from this detestable paper, which, to the disgrace of government, was long published with impunity, will suffice to demonstrate the justice of this assertion, and to prove the extreme audacity and confidence of the rebels at this period.

"He here offers to public justice the following detestable traitors, as spies and perjured informers. Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest, may reach his heart, and free the world from bondage." Here followed the list of the proscribed persons—a description of their persons, and every possible incitement and direction to assassination. Again, "Let the

Only two days before Lord Moira made his motion, a paper, containing this notice, was found stuck upon the wall of St. Mary's Church, Dublin, "Liberty! Erin go bragh!—You Protestant heretics! Take notice, that mass will commence in this Church by the first of May next; your blood shall flow, and your souls shall be sent to the devil your grandfather."* Although Lord Moira had exerted every effort to obtain, and performed every act to deserve, popularity, in the county of Down, where his estate was situated, yet, at a county meeting of United Irishmen, held at Saintfield, on the fourth of February, 1798, the following passage appeared in the minutes of their proceedings. "Nothing particular was done, except that Earl Moira's character was discussed at full length, to know whether he was a man that could be depended on, or not, by the people? It was agreed that he was as great a tyrant as the Lord Lieutenant, and a deeper designing one."† And on the very day on which Lord Moira's proposal for the adoption of conciliatory measures was submitted to the House of Peers, the Provincial Committees of rebels, both of Ulster and of Leinster, the one sitting at Armagh, the other in Dublin, adopted this resolution:—"That we will give no attention whatever to any attempt made by either House of Parliament, to divert the public mind from the grand object we have in view, as nothing short of complete emancipation of our country will satisfy us."

But, notwithstanding the bold front which Rebellion thus displayed, as it were, in the face of day, bidding defiance to Government, and relying on the success of their traitorous schemes, Sir Lawrence Parsons proposed, in the House of Commons, on the fifth of March, the same plan of conciliation and concession which the House of Peers

indignation of man be raised against the impious wretch who profanely assumes the title of reigning by the grace of God, and impudently tells the world he can do no wrong." The King is then called "an impious blasphemer;" told that his fate is inevitable; that "the first professor of his trade has recently bled for the crimes of the craft;" and that his throne is tottering.

* Sir R. Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 198.

† Report of the Secret Committee, Appendix, No. XIV, p. 115.

had so recently rejected. The arguments by which he attempted to support it were the same as those used by Lord Moira, and they experienced the same fate, for his motion was negatived by *one hundred and fifty-six* to *nineteen*.

Every thing was now ripe for that explosion which the Government had so long expected to take place, and its dreadful precursors, outrage and murder, proclaimed its near approach. The whole diabolical plan was formed with systematic precision; the French model had been so far followed, that no mean scruples of delicacy, no unmanly feelings of remorce, were suffered to interpose the slightest obstacle to the full accomplishment of the murderous project. All the Members of the Government, and the major part of the two Houses of Parliament, with all those loyal persons who had displayed their zeal, in defence of the establishment in Church and State, were included in the bloody roll of proscription. It was wished, however, to obtain the assistance of a French force, before the signal of massacre was given, and Arthur O'Connor, and the Priest, O'Coigley, had been dispatched to France for that purpose. But the vigilance of the British Government interrupted their mission; they were apprehended on the road; the Priest met the fate he deserved on the gallows; and his companion was kept in confinement, and afterwards sent a prisoner to Ireland.

Two of the leaders of the Belfast rebels, Hughes and Neilson, were in Dublin, in the month of April, to concert measures for the grand attack. Hughes afterwards declared, that he accompanied Neilson, on the 28th of April, to the house of Mr. Grattan, at Tinnehinch, that Mr. Grattan having learned from himself, that he was an *United Irishman*, questioned him much about the state of the North, and the number of houses burned there by *the Government* or the *Orange Men*. Mr. Grattan also enquired how many United Irishmen, and how many Orange Men, there were in his province; and he was told by Hughes, that he supposed about 126,000 of the former, and about 12,000 of the latter. In Mr. Grattan's library was a printed Constitution of the United Irishmen, respecting which Mr. Grattan asked Hughes various questions. Neilson had a private conference with Mr. Grattan, and, on taking leave,

Mr. Grattan told Neilson, in the presence of Hughes, that he would be in town on, or before, the Tuesday following. Neilson himself, admitted, that he had two interviews with Mr. Grattan, at Tinnehinch, in the month of April, and that he either shewed Mr. Grattan the Constitution of the United Irishmen, or explained it to him, "*and pressed him to come forward.*" * It is evident, if these men spoke truth, and no attempt, it is believed, has been made to impeach their veracity, that Mr. Grattan's zeal had, in this instance, transported him far, very far, beyond the bounds of discretion, and had brought him near, very near, to the confines of treason.

"*Misprision of treason,*" says one of the commentators on the Laws of England, "consists in *the bare knowledge and concealment of treason,* without any degree of assent thereto, for any assent makes the party a principal traitor, as, indeed, the concealment, which was construed aiding and abetting, did, at the common law, in like manner as the knowledge of a plot against the State, and not revealing it, was a capital crime in Florence, and other states of Italy. But it is now enacted, by the Statute 1 and 2, Ph. and Mar. c. 10, that a bare concealment of treason shall be only held a misprision. *This concealment becomes criminal, if the party apprized of the treason does not, as soon as conveniently may be, reveal it to some Judge of Assize, or Justice of the Peace.* But if there be any probable circumstances of assent, as if one goes to a treasonable meeting, knowing beforehand that a conspiracy is intended against the King; or, being in such company once by accident, and having heard such treasonable conspiracy, meets the same company again, and hears more of it, but conceals it;—this is an implied assent in law, and makes the concealer guilty of actual high treason. †

If this exposition of the law be applied to the facts divulged by Neilson and Hughes, it is impossible not to draw the conclusion, that it was the imperative duty of the Government to render this matter the

* Report from the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords, August 30, 1798.

† Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. IV. p. 120.

subject of a legal investigation. The charge was clear and positive; it was solemnly advanced before a Committee of the House of Peers, in the presence of the Lord High Chancellor of the Realm; and, unless the Government totally discredited the testimony of the witnesses, (who, be it observed, could not, at that period, have had the smallest interest to deceive them,) they betrayed not only a pusillanimous spirit, but a culpable neglect of their duty, in not carrying it before a proper tribunal. Indeed, justice to the party accused required the institution of a legal inquiry, in order that his innocence, if the charge were really unfounded, might be established in the most public, and the most satisfactory, manner, and on the most solid grounds. As it is, the unprejudiced voice of posterity must be left to pronounce judgment on the facts as they stand on the records of history.

All the precautions adopted by the government would, probably, have proved inadequate to avert, or to repel, the coming storm, had not a person, who was privy to the plans of the rebels, most providentially interfered to prevent their accomplishment. Mr. Thomas Reynolds, who had been a silk manufacturer in Dublin, having acquired a competent independence, had retired to an estate which he had purchased at Kilkea Castle, in the County of Kildare, where he had considerable influence among the Romanists. This circumstance induced Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Mr. Oliver Bond, two of the chief conspirators, to exert every effort in order to gain him over to their cause. They succeeded at last, and Mr. Reynolds took the usual Oath at the house of Bond, in Dublin, at the beginning of 1797. He was persuaded to accept the commission of Colonel in the Rebel Army, with the offices of Treasurer and Representative of the County of Kildare, and, afterwards, that of delegate for the province of Leinster. He soon, however, discovered that the conspirators, instead of intending to reform the abuses of the State, and to abolish all religious distinctions, which was their professed object at first, meditated the subversion of the Constitution, the massacre of the leading Members of the Government, and of such persons as should oppose their designs, and, therefore, he resolved to frustrate their plans, by embracing the first opportunity of communicating them to some person in whom he could confide.

After he had adopted this resolution, an opportunity presented itself for carrying it into effect. In a conversation which he had with a Mr. Cope, an eminent merchant of Dublin, that gentleman deplored, in strong terms, the dreadful outrages committed in various parts of the kingdom, which he justly considered as evident symptoms of an approaching rebellion. This opening Mr. Reynolds gladly availed himself of, and he informed his friend, that he knew a person who was possessed of all the secrets of the rebels, and who, by way of atonement for the crime which he had committed by joining them, was disposed to communicate to government all he knew of their plans and designs.—The only conditions which Reynolds prescribed, were the concealment of his name, for the present, and the supply of such a sum of money as would be necessary to pay the extraordinary expence which he must incur, by a temporary absence from the country, where his life, in consequence of his disclosure of the schemes of the rebels, would be exposed to the most imminent danger. These preliminary arrangements having been concluded, he unfolded the whole of this nefarious scheme. And, in consequence of this information, Mr. Swan, a magistrate of Dublin, accompanied by twelve serjeants, not in regimentals, repaired, on the twelfth of March, 1798, to the house of Oliver Bond, in Bridge Street, where the Leinster delegates were sitting in council. Here they seized a variety of important documents, containing such information as led to a discovery of the whole plot, and the particulars of the intended insurrection. The delegates, thirteen in number, were apprehended, as were, on the same day, Thomas A. Emmett, a barrister, William James M'Nevin, Messieurs Bond, Sweetman, Henry and Hugh Jackson ;—and warrants were issued against three others of the leading conspirators, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Richard M'Cormick, and W. Sampson, a barrister, who had effected their escape. *

It was not the intention of the rebels to make their destined attack on the government, before they had secured the assistance of their

* All these particulars are extracted from the report of the Secret Committee of the Irish Parliament.

French Allies; but, having perceived, that the judicious conduct of government, in blending mercy with rigour, extending the former to the repentant, and making the refractory feel the effects of the latter; and having all their plans unexpectedly disclosed, by the arrest of so many of their principal members, they resolved to make one desperate effort. For this purpose, their military committee immediately digested a plan for a general rising; they proposed to make themselves masters of the capital, and to secure the neighbouring camp at Laughlinstown, and the park of artillery at Chapelizod, on the same night. The rebels of the counties of Dublin, Wicklow, and Kildare, were to co-operate in this grand attack. As soon as the insurrection had thus commenced, the event was to be signified to the distant counties, in the North and South, by the stoppage of the mail coaches.

The fabrication of those murderous instruments of rebellion, pikes, was now carried on with the utmost industry, and with such barefaced effrontery, that blacksmiths were detected in making them, even at noon-day:* while leaden gutters were stripped off the houses to be converted into bullets. So ripe were the populace of Dublin for rebellion, that it required more prudence to restrain, than zeal to stimulate their efforts. In the month of April, a large body of them assembled in *the liberty*, and attempted to demolish the houses of some loyal subjects, but were prevented by the timely interposition of the Yeomanry. So confident were they of success, that, so long before as March, 1797, when the time for the renewal of publicans' licences arrived, the persons who applied for them told the magistrates, with a stern and insolent air, that that would be their last application;† and, in March, 1799, they used the same language. On the thirtieth of March, the Viceroy found it necessary to publish a proclamation, containing the most direct and positive orders to the officers commanding his Majesty's forces, to employ them with the utmost vigour and

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 203.

† Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 204. If the magistrates had discharged their duty, they would not have renewed the licences of men who had dared to make use of such threatening language.

decision for the suppression of a treasonable conspiracy against the government and constitution, which had manifested itself in open acts of violence and rebellion.

It was now deemed expedient to place Mr. Reynolds in a state of security. For this purpose he was arrested, on the sixth of May, by a party of the military, at Castledermot, and conveyed, in custody, to Dublin; and, as the rebels, who had discovered, what they called, his treachery, formed many plots against his life, he claimed the protection of government, and was provided with apartments at the castle. The rebels, however, defeated their own object, by attacking the character and conduct of Mr. Reynolds; since, by so doing, they effectually removed those scruples which he had hitherto cherished, and made him resolve to stand publicly forth, to reveal their plots to the world, and to bring them to condign punishment. A conspiracy was formed for murdering the Lord Chancellor Clare; and it was in agitation to seize his children, in order to hold them as hostages. On the eleventh of May, the government issued a proclamation, offering a reward of one thousand pounds, to any one who should apprehend Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Eight days after this proclamation appeared, certain information was received, that Lord Edward was in Dublin, and lodged in the house of one Murphey, a dealer in feathers, in Thomas-street. Accordingly, early in the evening of the nineteenth, Captains Swan and Ryan, of the Volunteers, with eight soldiers in disguise, repaired thither in order to apprehend him. While the officers were posting their men in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of an escape, Swan saw a woman run hastily up the stairs of Murphy's house, and, conceiving that she was going to apprize Lord Edward of their approach, he instantly followed her. He entered a room in which he found the object of his search lying on a bed, in his dressing jacket; and he informed his lordship that he had a warrant against him, and that resistance would be vain, assuring him, at the same time, that he would be treated with the utmost respect. Lord Edward, however, knowing that his life was forfeited to the violated laws of his country, resolved not to surrender it without a struggle. With a resolution, worthy a better cause, he sprang from the bed, and snapped a pistol at Swan, which missed fire.

He then drew a dagger, rushed upon Swan, and stabbed and cut him in several places. In this scuffle, Swan received a deep and dangerous wound under the ribs, which bled most profusely. Captain Ryan now came to the assistance of his colleague, and snapped a pocket pistol at Lord Edward, which missed fire; he then made a lunge at him with a sword-cane, which bent on his ribs, but which affected him so much, that Lord Edward threw himself upon the bed. Ryan now attempted to secure him, when another scuffle ensued, in which his lordship plunged a dagger into the side of his assailant; they then both fell from the bed to the ground, and when there, Ryan received many other desperate wounds, and one in the abdomen, so large, that his bowels came out on the floor.* At this instant, Major Sirr entered the room, and found the two wounded officers on the floor, each holding a leg of Lord Edward, who was moving towards the door. Sirr fired at his Lordship, and wounded him in the shoulder, on which he called out for mercy, and surrendered himself.—An attempt was made, by a numerous body of rebels, to rescue their leader, on his way to the castle, but Major Sirr having judiciously applied for a military force, it arrived in time to defeat their plan. Two days after this transaction, on the twenty-first of May, Messrs. Henry and John Sheares, two barristers, brothers, and natives of Cork, with Patrick Byrne, a bookseller in Grafton-street, Dublin, were apprehended; when, in the house of Henry Sheares, a most sanguinary proclamation was found, which was intended for circulation, the morning after the projected insurrection and massacre. The next day the House of Commons were apprized, by the Secretary to the Viceroy, that his Excellency had received information that the disaffected had been daring enough to form a plan, for the purpose of possessing themselves, in the course of that week, of the metropolis, of seizing the seat of government, and those in authority within the city; that, in consequence of such information, he had directed every military precaution to be taken which seemed expedient; that he had made full communication to the magistrates for the direction of their efforts; and that he had not a doubt, by the measure which would be pursued, that the designs of the rebels

* Ryan died of his wounds, in a few days, leaving behind him the character of an upright man, and a most loyal subject.

would be effectually and totally crushed. The address voted by the House contained every assurance of determined support which the occasion required; and it was presented by the whole House, with the Speaker at their head, who proceeded, on foot, through the streets, to the castle, in order to give the greater effect to their conduct.

The night of the twenty-third of May was finally fixed upon, as the commencement of that dreadful epoch, in which the empire of the law was to yield to the dominion of arms; in which the voice of humanity was to be silenced by the yells of assassination; the suggestions of conscience to be stifled by the dictates of fanaticism; the reign of social order to give place to the anarchy of rebellion; reason to be subdued by brutal force; and in which the fair face of a country, supereminently blessed by the bounteous hand of Providence, was to be disfigured and deformed, converted into a scene of desolation and blood, by the parricidal rage of her own children.

The plan of the rebels appears to have been lain with ability, and, from the smallness of the garrison of Dublin, had it not been for the seizure of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and other of their leaders, it is most probable that it would have been completely successful. Neilson, contrary to the opinion of Sheares, had resolved, in the first instance, to attack the prison of Newgate, in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald was confined,* and to liberate all the prisoners; and, about ten at night, having stationed his men at different posts, in the neighbourhood, he went to reconnoitre the place. Gregg, the keeper of Newgate, having perceived and recognized him, made an attempt to seize him, which Neilson resisted; two yeomen, however, coming up to Gregg's assistance, this rebel leader allowed himself to be taken, although he had thousands of armed men within a short distance of the spot; so ill were *his* measures combined for the accomplishment of the object which he had in view.

The castle was to have been attacked, at the same moment, in front and rear, by two desperate bands of ruffians, armed with cutlasses and pistols.

* Lord Edward Fitzgerald died of his wounds, in Newgate, on the fourth of June.

A select party were to be provided with long ladders, by means of which they could enter the bed-chambers of the principal members of the government, whom it was intended either to murder or to carry off as hostages. In the mean time the city was to have been set on fire in four different places, and the bason which supplied it with water, and the pipes through which it was conveyed, were to be destroyed.

In pursuance of the original plan, the Belfast mail-coach was stopped and burned near Santry; the Cork mail-coach was destroyed near Naas, and that destined for Athlone, at Lucan. The rebels at Santry called upon the inhabitants of the neighbouring cottages to rise, assuring them that the city and castle of Dublin were, by that time, in possession of their friends.—So confident were they of the success of their plans. The coachman and guard of the Limerick mail-coach were murdered near the Curragh of Kildare.

The provincial rebels, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, were only prevented from acting, by the apprehension of their leaders, and by the intelligence which they received of the slender garrison in the capital being under arms. But for these circumstances the attack on the metropolis would have been most formidable, and, as has been before observed, would, in all probability, have been successful; when the most dreadful consequences must have ensued, whether the rebels had ultimately succeeded or failed. The danger, too, was greatly increased by the discovery that, "near nine-tenths of the Roman Catholics in the Yeomanry corps were united Irishmen, and had taken an oath to be true to the rebels, in direct contradiction to their sworn allegiance; and that many of them, after having taken the oath of rebellion, had, by deliberate and pre-determined perjury, joined the Yeomanry corps for the purpose of getting arms into their hands, of learning the use of them, and of turning them against the loyalists, perhaps in the very moment of danger."* It was remarked that, in the city of Dublin, above two thousand Catholics solicited admittance into the several corps of Yeomanry during the six weeks immediately

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 220.

preceding the insurrection; and that most of them were proposed by Catholic yeomen, who afterwards either proved to be rebels, or were disarmed, under circumstances of strong suspicion.* It was further discovered, that the Popish domestics, both male and female, with very few exceptions, had taken the oath of the UNION, and were to have assisted in the projected insurrection and massacre of the night of the 23d of May.—There were above twenty thousand servants of this description in Dublin.†

Although the timely discovery of this infernal plan had enabled the government, most earnestly seconded by the loyal inhabitants of Dublin, to avert the intended effect of its first explosion, the rebels were by no means discouraged; the insurrection extended to various parts of the kingdom, and Ireland was now placed under martial law. Most of the regular forces had, at different periods, been sent on foreign service, and their places supplied by Fencible regiments, many of them Scotch. The same day on which the rebellion broke out in Dublin, May the 23d, the towns of Naas, Carlow, Baltingglass, Monasteven, and Clare, were attacked, and the rebels beaten at each of them, principally by the Irish Militia and Yeomen. On the 29th of the same month, General Sir James Duff defeated a large body of the rebels, on the Curragh of Kildare, and opened the passage from Dublin to Munster, which had been obstructed by them. On the same day, the town of Enniscorthy, in the county of Wexford, was attacked by the rebels, commanded by one Murphy, the Romish Priest of a neighbouring parish. It was defended by the Protestant Yeomanry alone. Enniscorthy is an open place, without fortifications, and the action was fought at the outskirts of the town. The Yeomanry did not exceed three hundred, while the rebel force amounted to six thousand men. The contest was

* Idem Ibid. Sir Richard Musgrave specifies several of the Yeomanry corps, in which the Catholic members were deeply concerned in the rebellion; and this was particularly the case in the Saint Sepulchre's corps, in which the Popish Yeomen were disarmed for having conspired to murder their Protestant officers, and fellow-soldiers.

† Idem Ibid. p. 221.

long and bloody. Forty-seven of the Yeomanry were killed, and above five hundred of the rebels. When the Romish inhabitants of the town saw the rebels give way, they set fire to the houses, most of which were thatched, in the rear of the Yeomanry, and obliged them, by the smoke and heat, to file off from the town, which was then entered by the rebels. The yeomanry retreated, without molestation, to Wexford, at the distance of eleven miles. The day before, the rebels had defeated a party of about a hundred of the North Cork Militia, most of whom they killed, and got possession of their muskets and ammunition, with which they greatly galled the Enniscorthy Yeomanry. On this success, the peasantry of the country, most of whom were Romanists, joined the rebels, who marched on to Wexford, which is a sea-port, and the county-town. There were but few troops in the place. Some gentlemen in the neighbourhood raised Yeomanry corps, but, having imprudently enrolled Romanists amongst them, they, to a man, deserted to the rebels, with their arms and ammunition; and there were numbers of Romish inhabitants in the town, who showed evident signs of disaffection. These circumstances induced the commander of the troops to evacuate Wexford, and to retire with his force, including the Yeomanry of Enniscorthy, to Duncannon Fort, a strong post at the distance of about thirty miles.

By this means the Rebels became masters of Wexford, when they were immediately joined by the great body of the Romanists, in the Counties of Wexford, Wicklow, Kildare, and Carlow. They defeated a detachment of the Army which had marched from Dublin, under Colonel Walpole, who suffered himself to be surprised by them, and who lost his life in the action. The remains of his party retired into the County of Wicklow, and took post at Arklow. The Rebels, elated with their success, mustered their forces, and advanced, on the fifth of June, against the town of Ross, which, with Duncannon-Fort, and the Town of Newtown-Barry, where the only places in the County of Wexford, of which they were not in possession. The County of Dublin Militia, led by Lord Mountjoy, with some other troops of Yeomanry, forming in the whole a body of fifteen hundred men, under the command of Generals Johnson and Eustace, were stationed at Ross.

The town is not fortified; there are some remains of an old wall, but it is now in ruins. The Rebels commenced the attack with a body of twenty-five thousand men. The troops had marched out of the Town to receive them, and, in order to throw them into disorder, the Rebels, with their pikes, drove a vast number of horses and oxen before them. The Rebels had some field pieces and howitzers, which they had taken, partly, from a small detachment of the Garrison of Duncannon-Fort, which had been, imprudently, sent out against them; and, partly, from the troops under Colonel Walpole. Their leaders had distributed among them a considerable quantity of whiskey, in order to render them more desperate by intoxication. They attacked the troops with great fury; and Lord Mountjoy was killed gallantly fighting at the head of his regiment.* The weight of the Rebel column, after a furious contest, forced the troops into the town, and the battle was continued, with great obstinacy, in the streets, till, at length, the courage and discipline of the Loyalists prevailed over the superior numbers of the Rebels, who were compelled, after a dreadful carnage, to retreat. Their slain, in the streets of the town and suburbs, amounted to two thousand two hundred, exclusive of numbers who, with difficulty, withdrew from the scene of action, and afterwards died of their wounds. The military were so fatigued that they were unable to pursue them. The battle, from the first attack of the Rebels to their final retreat, lasted eight hours.†

* This Nobleman was the first person who introduced a Bill into the Irish Parliament for the repeal of a part of the Popery Code, and, says a contemporary writer, "he, unfortunately, felt the bitter effects and inefficacy of his own system of conciliation."

† On the day on which the battle of Ross was fought, the barbarous massacre of Scullabogue took place. Scullabogue was situated about half a mile from the Rebel camp on Carrickbyrne Hill, in the county of Wexford, and a barn, there, was converted into a place of confinement for Protestant prisoners. Here, with a degree of savage ferocity, and of cold-blooded malice, the barbarians deliberately murdered two hundred and twenty-one innocent Protestants, of all ages and of both sexes. They set fire to the barn which contained one hundred and eighty four of these wretched victims, and thirty-seven were shot in front of the building. The horrid circumstances of cruelty attending this massacre are detailed, at length, in the interesting Memoirs of Sir Richard Musgrave, accompanied by the authorities for all the various facts which the author relates. Hence it appears, that the Captain of this sanguinary band refused to give the order for the massacre until he had received the commands

The inability to pursue the Rebels having prevented the dispersion of their army, their leaders resolved to try their fortunes again; and, in a few days after their unsuccessful attack on Ross, they marched to the opposite side of the county of Wexford, and assaulted the town of Arklow, situated on the great road from Wexford to Dublin, about thirty-three miles from the Capital. The rebels had eighteen thousand men, while the troops, who opposed them, under General Needham, did not exceed twelve hundred. Notwithstanding this disparity of numbers, the Rebels were again repulsed with great slaughter, chiefly by the courage of the Cavan Militia, under Colonel Barry, the Durham Fencibles, commanded by Colonel Skerrett, and a considerable body of Yeomanry.

On the seventh of June, a body of Rebels suddenly assembled in the county of Antrim, in the northern part of Ireland, rushed furiously into the town of Antrim, where many of the gentry and magistracy of the county were assembled, and among the rest, Lord O'Neil. The Yeomen of the place immediately flew to arms, and a contest ensued, in which Lord O'Neil received a mortal wound. About the same time the Rebels rose in a part of the county of Down, but were immediately attacked, defeated, and dispersed, by General Nugent, who commanded the troops at Belfast. This insurrection broke out on the estates of Lord Moira, most of whose tenants were actively engaged in it.

The rebels, in the county of Wexford, where the chief force of the Leinster Insurgents was concentrated, after their defeat at Ross and at Arklow, drew their main body together, consisting of about eighteen thousand men, to Enniscorthy, and encamped on a high and steep hill, called Vinegar Hill, adjacent to that town which it overlooks and commands;—the Slany, a very considerable river, running at the base of the

of a Priest for that purpose. Five Romanists also perished in the barn at Scullabogue; two of them were thus murdered because they would not consent to the murder of their Protestant masters;—a third for playing on his bag-pipes, a loyal song; and the two others, father and son, for being suspected of loyalty from having obtained a pass from General Fawcett.—*Musgrave's Memoirs*, p. 425—428.

hill in a winding channel, and washing one-half of its circumference. This was a very strong post, and, if well defended, might have bid defiance to a considerable army. Defeated as the Rebels had been they seemed to have given up the idea of offensive operations, till their French succours should arrive, which they impatiently expected; and, relying on the strength of their position, determined, there, to await the attack of the Royal army which they knew to be assembling on all sides. They had, at the same time, a numerous garrison in the town of Wexford, and were in possession of the whole sea-coast from Arklow to the mouth of Waterford harbour, all which their present position effectually covered. The passage from thence to the French coast, particularly to Brest, was short; they had some good cannon and howitzers, and were in no want of ammunition. In this formidable position, and thus provided, they were attacked by the Royal army, a great portion of which consisted of Militia and Yeomen, and driven from it, after a short, feeble, and ineffectual struggle. The whole body of Rebels would have been taken or destroyed, had not one column of the army, under General Needham, from some confusion or mistake in the orders, been prevented from taking the situation which had originally been appointed for it; by which means an opening was left, in the line of circumvallation (which, but for this, had been complete) through which nearly the whole of the rebel army escaped in the greatest disorder, part of them flying towards the mountains of Wicklow, and part of that chain of mountains which divides the counties of Carlow and Wexford.*

* When the Rebels determined to fix their head-quarters at Vinegar Hill, they took the neighbouring town of Enniscorthy, in which they committed the most dreadful ravages, and the most wanton acts of barbarity. One of the first objects on which they wreaked their fanatical vengeance was the Parish Church, which they completely gutted, and burnt all the materials at the door, where they tore into pieces the bibles and prayer-books. They burnt the parsonage-house, destroyed between four and five hundred other habitations, and massacred a great number of Protestant inhabitants, without distinction of age or condition. Indeed, it appears, that they held permanent Committees of assassination, in their camp on Vinegar Hill, under the immediate direction of their Priests, who did not scruple to sanction, with their countenance, acts of rebellion, and deeds of murder. When the destined victims were led forth to be murdered in cold blood, the executioners often knelt down, crossed themselves, and said a prayer, before they performed their bloody task. Mr. Ram, a brother of Lord Courtown, was informed, by his Catholic tenants, that they had entered into the rebellion, at the

The Rebels in the town of Wexford, hearing of the defeat, abandoned the place, and joined that party which fled towards the Wicklow mountains. The day before they fled, however, they took ninety-seven Protestants from the prison of Wexford, and murdered them with pikes on the bridge; and the massacre of one hundred more was intended for the following day; when the approach of the Royal army compelled the Rebels to forego the completion of their bloody purpose, and to seek for safety in flight. It is lamentable to relate that here, as in every other place, where similar acts of cruelty were perpetrated, the Popish multitude acted under the influence and mostly under the immediate direction of their Priests.* And, though there were fifteen or sixteen Popish Priests resident in the town, there was but one, Father Corrin, who interfered to save the life of a single Protestant.*

instigation of their Priests, that it was usual, in the Rebel camp, for the Priest of each parish to call over the names of his own parishioners; and that, in the event of being incapacitated by age or infirmity, his coadjutor supplied his place. Mass was regularly said in the camp, and all the forms of the Roman Church rigorously observed. Among the most conspicuous of the Rebel Priests were Fathers Murphy, Roche, Kearns, and Sutton, who were not less active in their temporal character of Rebels than in their spiritual character of Priests. It is believed, that not less than five hundred Protestants were thus deliberately murdered, in the Rebel camp, under no other pretence, than that they were *Heretics* or *Protestants*. And, when they murdered their victims, the Rebels frequently declared their resolution to extirpate Heresy, by serving all Heretics in the same way. These facts are established, in a manner that leaves no room to question their authenticity, by Sir Richard Musgrave, in his Memoirs, who has displayed the most laudable industry, in the collection of documents and proofs, for placing the object of the Rebellion, and the conduct of the Rebels, in a true point of view.—Whatever objections the prejudiced voice of Party may oppose to his deductions, the facts which he has collected speak for themselves, in a voice too strong to be stifled by artifice, or silenced by sophistry.

* It is clearly demonstrated by Sir Richard Musgrave, that the Priests possessed unbounded influence over the Rebels, whence it follows, of necessity, not only that they could have prevented the numerous massacres which they perpetrated, but even the Rebellion itself.——Wherever they granted protections, they were uniformly respected by the rebels, and the parties who bore them walked about in safety. A young man from Ross is stated to have been so shocked at the massacres on the bridge of Wexford, as to have hastened to Doctor Caulfield, the Popish Bishop of the diocese, to inform him of them, and to beseech him to prevent them. The Bishop refused to interfere himself, but said his chaplain, Father Roche, who was present, should go for that purpose. No one, however, witnessed the interposition

When the King's troops entered Wexford, they took the rebel leaders, Father Roche, and Keogh, who were tried and executed.—The

of Mr. Roche. George Taylor, in his history of the rebellion in the county of Wexford, observes, that, during the massacres, " a rebel captain, shocked at the cries of the victims, ran to the Popish Bishop, who was then drinking wine with the utmost composure after dinner; and, knowing that he could stop the massacre sooner than any other person, entreated him, for the mercy of God, to come and save the prisoners. He, in a very unconcerned manner, replied, " It was no affair of his;" and requested the captain would sit down and take a glass of wine with him, adding, " *that the people must be gratified.*" The captain refused the bishop's invitation; and, filled with abhorrence and distress of mind, walked silently away." It requires no great skill in casuistry to know, that the man who has the power to prevent a murder, without incurring any danger himself, and refuses to exert it, is chargeable with all the moral guilt which attaches to a consent to the commission of murder. But it is conceived, that a minister of religion, whose duty it is to enforce, as far as he is able, obedience to every commandment of God, and who is in the habit of proclaiming that precept of the decalogue " THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER," is chargeable with something more than the moral guilt attaching to the *consent*, when he allows a murder to be committed, which he has the ability to prevent, and especially when he is called upon and exhorted to prevent it.

When a charge so serious is preferred against ministers of religion, as that of violating every principle of duty, by encouraging crimes which they are bound, if possible, to prevent, it is highly necessary to adduce the strongest proofs in support of it. A lady of Wexford, who kept a diary in which she marked the proceedings of the rebels, while they were in possession of that town, states the following circumstance: " Mr. Patrick Redmond, a Roman Catholic, and one of the Committee for provisions, came to us the evening of the day the massacre was committed. He was, like ourselves, half-dead with horror, and declared that he entreated the priests to come down with their crucifixes and prevent the massacre; *but they all refused to do so.* We told him that Father Broe said he had saved nineteen prisoners. This Mr. Redmond denied, and said it was the express," (meaning the express from the rebel camp at Vinegar-Hill, announcing the approach of the Royal army) " that saved them."

Doctor M'Nevin, in his evidence before a Secret Committee of the Irish House of Lords, in August, 1798, deposed, " That the Catholic priests had ceased to be alarmed at the calumnies which had been propagated of French irreligion, and were well affected to the cause; that some of them had rendered great service in propagating, with discreet zeal, the system of the Irish union."

Though Doctor Caulfield did not chuse to devote a few minutes to the purpose of rescuing innocent Protestants from a cruel death, he could, it seems, without hesitation, pass a whole hour in the street, in bestowing—will posterity believe the fact? his BENEDICTIONS on rebels, with the instruments of murder in their hands, and on their way to perpetrate the most horrible

Rebel General, John Hay, was also taken by Gen. Dundas's army and hanged. Mr. Bagenall Harvey, and Mr. John Colclough, two other of

acts of unprovoked and savage cruelty. The following affidavit, which is extracted from the appendix to Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, was made by Mrs. Crane, a most respectable lady, sister to the Irish Judge Chamberlaine —

" *County of Wexford to wit.*

" ELIZABETH CRANE, of the county of Wexford, widow, being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists, deposeth and saith, That on the twentieth day of June last, she was in her own house, in great anxiety, apprehending, from circumstances which had happened that morning, the life of her son-in-law, Middleton Robson, a loyalist, then a prisoner in the gaol of Wexford, to be in immediate and imminent danger; that in the afternoon of said twentieth day, between the hours of two and four of the clock, as said deponent believeth, she saw the Rev. Doctor Caulfield, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Roche, a priest of said town, pass by her house towards a lane, which communicates from the Back-street of said town to Gibson's lane, which gave her great pleasure, as she supposed they were going to intercede for the prisoners. That near the entrance of said lane they were met by a number of men, armed with pikes and other weapons, coming, as she believeth, from the gaol, who, as they came up to Doctor Caulfield, kneeled down, for the purpose, as deponent believeth, of receiving Dr. Caulfield's blessing, which he gave, spreading his hands over their heads, as she had seen him do to others whom he blessed, and that the men afterwards passed on, as she supposeth, to the bridge; and that very shortly afterwards, two men, armed with pikes, entered her house, who told her, 'They were slaughtering on the bridge; that they would never draw bridle, till they would put them all on a level, and that by that time to-morrow, there would be neither buying or selling in Wexford;' and that immediately before, or during, the time Doctor Caulfield was blessing, which was of a tedious length, nearly, as she thinks, an hour, said deponent heard a shot, by which she believes Matthewson was killed at the gaol.

" ELIZABETH CRANE.

" *Sworn before me at Wexford, this sixteenth day of March*, 1799.

" WILLIAM TOOLE."

As an additional proof of the influence and authority enjoyed and exercised by the priests, with the rebels, it must be added, that the same Father Corrin, who has been before mentioned, was in the habit of granting *protections* which were always respected. A Mrs. Lett, wife to a brewer at Enniscorthy, swore, upon the trial of a rebel, that she had herself a protection from Father Corrin; and that her husband being a prisoner in Wexford gaol, one Thomas Clooney, a rebel, offered to become surety for his good behaviour, " if Mr. Corrin, would *allow* him to be taken out of gaol," and that she went with the paper to Mr. Corrin, but *he would not* ALLOW *him to be liberated.*

I am very well aware that Doctor Caulfield, the Popish Bishop of Wexford, and several of his clergy, published an answer to Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, in which the Bishop did

their leaders, were apprehended in an island, about six leagues from Wexford, and brought to that town, where they suffered the sentence of

not scruple to deny the facts stated in the above affidavit of Mrs. Crane; asserting that he did not leave his house on the day of the massacre in Wexford, and producing the oath of his servant to corroborate his own affirmation; which servant, however, only says that "*to the best of his knowledge* his said master, Doctor Caulfield, did not leave his house on that day." Now this cautious deposition of the servant cannot be opposed to the positive testimony of Mrs. Crane, who is represented as a lady of great piety and of unimpeached character; and who could have neither interest nor any other motive to misrepresent such a fact.—She saw the Bishop bless the rebels; and she swore to what she saw. It would be an insult to common sense, as well as a violation of common justice, to put the interested assertion of Doctor Caulfield in competition with the unbiassed testimony of such a witness. That the Doctor was in the habit of bestowing his benedictions on these children of Satan, who rebelled against their king, and murdered his loyal subjects, is proved by other evidence. Mr. Loftus Richards, a respectable inhabitant of Wexford, has declared, "That *he saw* Doctor Caulfield, *the morning after the massacre*, meet a party of rebels in a street there, and that they fell on their knees, and remained in that posture till they received his benediction." Some Protestant ladies, who were prisoners at Wexford, also affirmed, that they were frequently eye-witnesses of this scene; and that a body of the lower class of people never met Doctor Caulfield, without kneeling, and remaining on their knees till he blessed them.—*Observations on the Reply of the Right Reverend Doctor Caulfield, Roman Catholic Bishop, and of the Roman Catholic Clergy, of Wexford, to the misrepresentations of Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart. &c.* 8vo. Dublin, p. 24. But, on such a subject, the evidence of a Popish Priest may, by the advocates of Doctor Caulfield, probably, be deemed more satisfactory than the testimony of Protestants. The following is an Extract from a Letter, dated August the 30th, 1799, from Father Byrne, a Priest in the diocese of Wexford, to Mr. Donovan, a most respectable Attorney, of Peter-Street, Dublin.

"SIR,

"I am a Romish Priest.—Imposed upon *by the example of my Bishop*, I said mass at the Rebel camp; my behaviour during the time was such, that I am neither sorry for, nor ashamed of, it. I saved from twenty to thirty lives, who will make affidavit of it in any Court; and this I look upon to be more meritorious (at least in the sight of God) than running away like many others, who now make such a boast of their loyalty. As a proof of the public good-will towards me, my Chapel has never been insulted, though situated in the most public place in the county. On the return of the King's Government, my first concern was, to obtain his Majesty's pardon, for that degree of rebellion of which I was guilty, which (long may he live!) I obtained without any difficulty;—but guess, Sir, my astonishment at receiving a letter from my Bishop, silencing me from my clerical function in this diocese, when his own conduct was what chiefly led me astray, (if I except the degree of terror the Rebels put me into after the Government was upset all round me,) for during the ferment, which preceded the explosion, he never instructed me how to act. Instead of excommunicating them for their horrid

the law, together with Cornelius Grogan, and other of the Rebel chiefs. Mr. Harvey was a man of a weak mind, who had been led into the

rebellion, *he gave them his benediction* in the Chapel-yard, two days after they took possession of Wexford. *Instead of excommunicating the barbarous murderers at ——— he gave all his Priests power to give absolution for murder;—a power which he ever till then reserved to himself.* Even the last battle in this county *was fought by his direction*, and the Priest, who served as his Aide-de-camp on the occasion, he kept in his house till last spring, when he was obliged to smuggle him out of the country, otherwise he would have fallen a victim to outraged justice; and, indeed, it is but of little avail to me, that the King should grant me both my life and liberty, if he suffers this gentleman to starve me. I have been at a great expence to qualify myself to live by the Gospel, and am now too old to embark in any other line, to procure myself bread.—Hence I conceive, and am advised thereto, that the laws of my country will procure me redress; nor do I think it a weak argument in proof of my loyalty, that I am the first Priest who has appealed to the laws of my country in preference to a foreign jurisdiction. My losses on this account, to the present day, I state at one hundred and six guineas, I, therefore, beseech you, Sir, to take my case in hand, and if you find me law, I will find you money."

The Bishop was evidently, on this occasion, playing a deep game, and acting most insidiously, by impeaching the loyalty of others in order to secure his own from suspicion. He probably deemed this necessary for the purpose of obtaining, from the new Viceroy, a *certificate of loyalty*, which was procured through the medium of Doctor Troy, with as little difficulty as could be expected, on the following terms:

"SIR, "*Dublin Castle, May 11th*, 1800.

"In answer to the honour of your Letter of the 9th inst. which I have laid before my Lord Lieutenant, I am to assure you, that Government will give Doctor Caulfield that protection which, from his conduct and character as a loyal subject, he appears justly to merit.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient Servant,

"*To the most Reverend Doctor Troy, North King-Street.*" "E. B. LITTLEHALES.

And, in another Letter from Colonel Littlehales, dated June the 30th, that officer says, "that his Excellency has no cause to alter the opinion he has imbibed of *the loyalty and proper deportment* of Doctor Caulfield." No doubt, Doctor Troy, himself, was the voucher for the loyalty and proper deportment of his spiritual colleague. What that *loyalty* was, and what that *proper deportment*, the facts which have been related sufficiently explain.—But it is perfectly clear that Lord Cornwallis was most inaccurately informed of the conduct and principles of individuals, and exercised very little discrimination, in appreciating both *facts* and *actions*.

The following affidavit will throw some further light on the conduct of Doctor Caulfield,

Rebellion by the artifices and persuasions of abler, and of bolder, villains. He was not cruel in his disposition, and often interfered to

which procured the honourable testimony of the Viceroy, as well as on that of Father Kavenagh, another Romish Priest.

" John Higgenbottom sweareth, on the Holy Evangelists, that he was a prisoner, with the rebels, in Gorey, the day of the battle of Arklow, that he was bailed out by Farlong, Darcy, and Rossiter, of Gorey, and thereby permitted to be a prisoner at large; that he went with Rossiter into Darcy's, a public house, and into a room where they sat to drink, and shortly after, Kavenagh and Synnot, priests, and two *other* Rebels, came into them; that after some time, Synnot said, 'Murphy (Father John Murphy a Rebel leader) had but seven men when he began the business, and now you see what it has come to;' he then took out a letter, and shewed it to Redmond, saying, 'You may read that, and see how long I have been concerned in this business; and, though I stood against it as long as I could, you may see, in that Letter, HOW I WAS COMPELLED BY THE BISHOP TO IT.' Some time after, while the battle raged, and could be heard, he said, 'There are some people now lashed round hell with an iron flail.'

" Sworn before me, " JOHN HIGGENBOTTOM.

" PETER BROWN.

" I certify that the above affidavit was made before me; and that I know Higgenbottom well, and believe him to be well worthy of credit.

" PETER BROWN, *Dean of Ferns.*"

When Mr. Allen, a Protestant of New Ross, who had lived in habits of intimacy with Doctor Caulfield, was in prison, at Wexford, his wife implored the Doctor to liberate him; but he refused to interfere, observing, that her husband would not have been there if he had not deserved it!!!

Doctor Caulfield's *certificate of loyalty* will not enable him to invalidate these facts, which are established on the best authority, nor yet to stand up against them. Indeed, the mere application for a certificate of loyalty, implies the consciousness of some just grounds for the impeachment of loyalty, in the applicant.—On this same principle, no doubt, an officer, recently cashiered for *cowardice*, judged it prudent, some years before his character was fully known, to obtain, from his colleagues, a *certificate of courage!* This application was the more extraordinary, as the book in which his conduct was exposed had not appeared at the time when it was made.—The Doctor, however, proved his gratitude to the easy Viceroy, by prevailing on the Popish multitude, who had made the most sanguinary efforts, in 1798, for promoting the separation of the two kingdoms, to sign an address, in 1799, in favour of the plan in agitation for uniting them for ever. Indeed, in the *certificate* and the *address*, *cause* and *effect* may be clearly discerned.

prevent the effusion of blood. On his trial, he declared, "that he had become a member of the Union three years before; that he imagined

In his pretended justification, Doctor Caulfield peremptorily denies, that the protections granted by the priests during the rebellion had any effect, and even insinuates that none were granted. His words are, "As to the invariable effects of protections granted by priests, I repeat and insist, there were none; nor could any priest, except a blockhead, attempt to grant any such." Most certainly protection were granted, very frequently by priests; and they never failed to preserve the lives of those to whom they were granted. And, strange to say, Doctor Caulfield was, himself, the very blockhead whom he censures, for he granted the following protection to two gentlemen of Enniscorthy, who were in prison at Wexford; and, still more strange, it procured their immediate release.

"From the excellent characters of the above gentlemen, I beg leave, in the name of Jesus Christ, to recommend them to be protected.

"*Wexford, June 15th*, 1798." "JAMES CAULFIELD.

In one part of his justification, (p. 18) the Doctor declares that he was absolutely ignorant of the massacre being intended or perpetrated, *until some hours after it had ceased.* A declaration, the falsehood of which is demonstrated as well by moral evidence as by positive testimony. But what the Doctor betrayed the greatest anxiety to establish was, the unwarrantable assertion (in his preface) that, "of all the insurrections that took place in Ireland, in 1798, the name of religion was only used in Wexford." If there be any one fact more clearly demonstrated than another, relating to this dreadful rebellion, it is this—that *religion*, or rather *fanaticism*, was the grand engine by which the Popish multitude were put in motion, and stimulated to the commission of those horrid acts of cruelty which the historian shudders to record. Not only in the county of Wexford was the extirpation of *heresy* the cry, but wherever the rebels were enabled to establish a footing. Of the many proofs which might be adduced in confirmation of this fact, the following will suffice to shew the inaccuracy of the Doctor's assertion. Soon after the French landed, the following notice was posted on the church of Killyshee, in the county of Westmeath. "Take notice, *heretick* usurpers! that the brave slaves of this island will no longer lie in bondage; the die is cast, our deliverers are come, and the royal brute," (meaning the King) "who held the iron rod of despotic tyranny, is expiring, nor shall *one* govern. Our old holy religion shall be re-established in *this house*, and the earth shall no longer be burdened with *bloody hereticks*, who, under the pretence of rebellion, (which they themselves have raised) mean to massacre us.

"The fleur de lis and harp we will display,
"While tyrant heretics shall mould to clay.
"Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!"

More attention has been bestowed on this subject than to many readers, possibly, may

the only object was to reform the constitution ; and that he had not, till recently, discovered that the Popish priests were deeply concerned

seem necessary. But so much pains seem to have been taken for keeping the most prominent feature of the rebellion out of sight, by all parties, that it became the duty of the historian to endeavour, at least, to remove the screen which had been placed to conceal it from public view. The Opposition, anxious only to fix blame and guilt on the government, not only denied the existence of every religious motive, but pertinaciously refused to ascribe the rebellion to any thing but those acts of coercion which they called oppressive, which were adopted for the purpose of checking its progress, and which of course were not carried into effect till *after* the rebellion, which they were stated to produce, had begun. They even went so far as to make it a question whether the people of Ireland had not a *right to rebel*. On the *twenty-first of June*, more than a fortnight after the horrible massacre of the Protestants, at Scullabogue, in the debate on the motion for allowing the English militia to serve in Ireland, Mr. Jekyll did not scruple to declare, " that he saw no reason for calling the disturbances in Ireland an *unnatural* and *wicked* rebellion. Unless proper and regular documents were laid before the House to *prove* that an unnatural and wicked rebellion raged in Ireland, how could we know but that the people of Ireland had *a right to make this resistance*."* This is not the place to animadvert on language so grossly inflammatory and so highly unconstitutional. It is quoted, here, merely to shew the sentiments of the party on the Irish rebellion. On the other hand, the Ministers had no other means of justifying their system of *concession* to the Irish Papists, than by admitting their continued loyalty and good conduct, and, consequently, by discouraging every idea, that religion had any thing to do with the rebellion. But it is the duty of the historian to reject, alike, the misrepresentations of all parties, and to have for his sole object the establishment of truth.

It is impossible, after a careful examination of all the authenticated facts relating to this rebellion, and after an attentive perusal of all the documents which have appeared, not to conclude that, in respect of the great mass of the Papists actively engaged in it, *it was, to all intents and purposes, a* RELIGIOUS WAR. When the rebellion, indeed, was first formed, from the desire to conciliate the Presbyterians of the North, and the few Protestant leaders who took a part in it, this object was most cautiously concealed. No sooner, however, did the time for its explosion arrive, than it became manifest, in all the proceedings of the rebels; —and the proofs of its existence are too numerous to admit of a doubt, and too strong to be shaken either by assertion or by argument. But, it must not be supposed that the nobility and principal gentry of the Romish Church in Ireland were implicated in the guilt of rebellion. On the contrary, they condemned the conduct of the infuriated multitude, and endeavoured, by their exhortations and example, to bring them back to the path of duty. A loyal address was drawn up, immediately after the rebellion broke out, which was subscribed by the Earls of Fingal and Kenmare, Dr. Troy, and many others of the principal Catholics, resident in and about the capital. Lord Fingal, too, manifested great activity and gallantry, at the head of

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports.

in it, and that the extermination of Protestants was their main design.* That, having opposed their sanguinary views, he was deposed, and the command was given to that infamous villain, Father Roche; that he was then carried to the Three-Rock Camp as a prisoner, where he remained a few days, and was so far at liberty as to be allowed to walk about; but so closely watched, that, with every wish to make his escape, he found it impossible, till the evening on which the rebels fled in every direction, on the approach of the King's troops." When asked by a friend, how he came to consent to the bloody business of Scullabogue, he with visible symptoms of horror, answered, "that it was brought about by an infamous, sanguinary popish faction."

The rebels who, after the evacuation of Wexford, had retreated towards the mountains of Carlow, passed from thence into the Kilkenny mountains, and there assaulted the little town of Castlecomer. A small party of the Waterford and Downshire Militia checked their progress for a while, in a most gallant manner; and, notwithstanding the immense superiority of numbers opposed to them, maintained their ground, till Sir Charles Asgill arrived to their assistance, with nine hundred men of the garrison of Kilkenny, when a few discharges of grape shot drove the rebels from the place. Sir Charles then returned to Kilkenny, and all the Protestants of Castlecomer expecting another attack, left their habitations and took refuge in that town. Castlecomer was, of course,

his corps, in opposing the rebels in the field. And several of the Catholic gentlemen manifested equal zeal and loyalty. But the good conduct of the enlightened and loyal few did not alter the nature and character of the rebellion. Operating on such minds, the tenets and principles of the Church of Rome might, possibly, not produce effects dangerous to civil society in a Protestant State. But, where they act upon low and uninformed minds, such as constitute the great mass of the Popish community in Ireland, by the complete ascendancy which they give to the Priests over their weak and deluded followers;—and by rendering them, in every respect, the active instruments of superstition and fanaticism, ready to be employed for any purpose, however daring and however desperate, they are pregnant with the most formidable dangers to the constitution, and cannot be too strictly watched, or too strongly guarded.

* This we are assured, by the historian of the Irish rebellions, was kept a profound secret from the Protestant leaders.

subjected to all those enormities which the rebels were accustomed to inflict on every place which they attacked. But a considerable body of Yeomanry, from the adjacent Queen's County, with the brave Colonel Pole at their head, advanced against them, compelled them to retreat, and pursued them with activity. Sir Charles Asgill apprized of this, again marched out of Kilkenny, joined the Yeomanry, and both fell on this party of flying rebels, whom they routed with very great slaughter, and completely dispersed. Their General, father John Murphy, of Boulavogue, fled drunk from the field of battle, and was shortly after taken at Tullow, in the county of Carlow, and hanged. Another priest, of the same name, who acted as his aid-de-camp, fell in the action. All these transactions happened within a few days after the rout of the rebels at Vinegar-hill, on the 20th of June, 1798; and from that time it may justly be said that the rebellion was extinguished; for, though the party which fled into the Wicklow mountains was compelled, by hunger, to descend into the plains, and to make an inroad into the county of Meath, yet it was divided into small detached bodies, which were hunted from place to place by the Yeomanry, and speedily destroyed; very few of them escaping back to the mountains.*

Soon after the rebellion broke out, the British government, probably thinking it right that, during the confusion of a civil war, the military and civil power should be vested in the same hands, or rather that a military Viceroy would be best adapted to the state of the country, re-called Earl Camden, whose wisdom and firmness had already given a death-blow to the rebellion, and sent Lord Cornwallis to succeed him. This last nobleman took with him full powers to grant a general pardon to the whole body of the rebels, with very few exceptions. He was sworn into office on the 20th of June, the very day on which the rebel-camp, on Vinegar-Hill, was stormed and carried. He was followed by several regiments of English militia, who arrived in time to assist the loyal Protestants of Ireland, (who had successfully crushed the hydra of rebellion,) to oppose the threatened invasion of the French.

* Duigenan's Fair Representation, &c. p. 92.

Soon after his Lordship's arrival, the two Sheares', and some other of the rebel leaders, were tried, convicted, and executed, at Dublin. Oliver Bond was also tried and condemned, but his forfeited life was spared by the lenity of government, and his punishment was commuted for perpetual banishment. The other rebel chiefs who were in prison, expecting to share the fate of their colleagues, interceded with Mr. Dobbs, a Barrister and Member of Parliament, to become their mediator with government. A conference was, in consequence, holden between the Lord Chancellor Clare, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Edward Cooke, on the one side, and Messieurs Arthur O'Connor, Emmett, and Dr. M'Nevin, the rebel delegates, on the other. It was then agreed that, on condition that the prisoners should disclose the whole of the conspiracy, including their correspondence and intercourse with the French government, their lives (to the number of seventy) should be spared, and they should have liberty to retire to any country, not at war with Great Britain. As, however, they were found to abuse the lenity of government by secretly labouring to revive the expiring flame of rebellion, it was deemed expedient to send twenty of the most refractory of them* into confinement, at Fort George, in Scotland, until a proper opportunity should occur for transporting them to the continent.

At length the moment, which had been so long and so anxiously expected by the rebels, arrived;—on the twenty-second of August, three French frigates appeared in the Bay of Killala, a small town in the county of Mayo, which is the residence of the Bishop; who had a very numerous company at his house, it being the time at which he held a visitation. When the troops landed from the frigates, they proved to be a French detachment of one thousand and seventy men, under the command of General Humbert, who brought with him

* The self-convicted traitors, who were conveyed to Fort George, were Samuel Neilson, Thomas Russell, Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Addis Emmet, William James M'Nevin, Matthew Dowling, John Sweetman, Joseph Cuthbert, Roger O'Connor, John Sweeney, Hugh Wilson, John Chambers, Joseph Cormick, Edward Hudson, George Cumming, William Dowdall, Robert Hunter, Robert Simms, William Tenant, and Steele Dickson, a Presbyterian Minister.

between five and six thousand stand of arms, and a number of uniforms and military accoutrements. The General established his head-quarters at the episcopal palace, and was very soon joined by some thousands of the people in the neighbouring county, to whom he distributed arms and clothes. He told the Bishop that he came to give liberty to the Irish, and to render them independent of England.

The joy of the rebels, however, at the long-expected arrival of their friends, was somewhat damped by the conduct of the latter. They imagined that the invaders would commence their career with the slaughter of the Protestants, and the destruction of their property; that the Popish religion would be immediately established with the utmost splendour on the ruins of the Established Church; and that the estates which had been forfeited in former rebellions would be restored to the families of their ancient proprietors. But their astonishment was great when they were informed by the French, that their object was to give them a new constitution, similar to that established in France; that they would not suffer any person to be persecuted for religious opinions; and that, as they considered both religions as ridiculous and absurd, they laughed at those who made them objects of contention.

On Sunday, the twenty-sixth of August, the main body of the French, accompanied by a great number of the rebels, marched to Ballina, having left behind them a detachment of two hundred men, to guard their ammunition, and to secure their retreat.* From Ballina they proceeded towards

* Several Popish priests, and among others, Father Thomas Munnelly, of the Backs, and curate to the parish of the Popish Bishop, Bellew, and Father Sweeney, offered their services to the French soon after they landed. The latter said to the French officers, "as every thing belonging to the Protestants will be confiscated, I should be obliged to Monsieur Charost to let me have the Bishop's library, as I am fond of reading;" but Charost, turning from him with a look of contempt, answered—"The Bishop's library is as much his own now as ever it was." *A narrative of what passed at Killala, in the county of Mayo, and the parts adjacent, during the French invasion in the summer of* 1798. By the Bishop of Killala, p. 98. Sweeney was afterwards hanged; but Munnelly availed himself of the proclamation, and escaped. Father Dease, a priest, having been engaged in recruiting for the French, in the county of Sligo, was taken prisoner by a gentleman in the neighbourhood. He was on the point of being

Castlebar, where Major-general Hutchinson commanded. He had with him the Kilkenny, and part of the Longford regiments of militia, a small portion of the 6th regiment of foot, a part of the 6th dragoon guards, and a few Yeomen and Fencibles. After a sharp action, which lasted some time, the infantry gave way, and the French remained masters of the field. They left Castlebar on the fourth of September, and directed their march to Sligo. When they reached Coloony, a village about five miles distant from that town, they were attacked by Colonel Vereker, with a detachment of the city of Limerick militia, and a few Yeomen, not exceeding, in the whole, two hundred and eighty-six men, and two curricle guns. The French had, at this time, about nine hundred men, besides two hundred and fifty deserters from the Longford and Kilkenny militia. Colonel Vereker had taken an advantageous post, and, for upwards of an hour and a half, gallantly maintained it against such a superior force. The French had twenty-eight men killed, and a great many wounded. This check induced them to forego their design upon Sligo, and to take the road to Drumahair.

Lord Cornwallis meanwhile had left Dublin, and, with Lieutenant-General Lake, advanced in pursuit of the French. On the night of the seventh of September, the latter, with his division, reached Ballintogher, between Drumahair and Coloony. He overtook the French the next day, at Ballynaninck, where their commander, Sarrasin, surrendered; and, after a short action, the whole of the French army under General Humbert laid down their arms. The French Generals, indeed, had very soon perceived that they had a hopeless task to perform, and they loaded the United Irishmen with execrations, for having invited them to undertake a fruitless expedition. They displayed the greatest contempt for the bigotry of the common Irish papists, and were amazed to hear

hanged, when Captain Ormsby, of the Tireragh Yeoman cavalry, came up, and consented to spare his life, on a promise of revealing all he knew. He then declared, what he afterwards solemnly and deliberately confirmed by his oath before a magistrate, that Dr. Bellew, the titular Bishop of the diocese, encouraged his clergy, at a general meeting, to rise on the present occasion; and that it was at his instigation they were so active in assisting the French. *Musgrave's Memoirs*, p. 608.

them say, that they came to take arms for them and their blessed Virgin. Mr. Charost told the Bishop of Killala, "that they had just driven the Pope out of Italy, and did not expect to find him so suddenly in Ireland."

When the French changed their route from Coloony towards the metropolis, the most active exertions were used in all the intervening counties, Leitrim, Longford, Monaghan, Roscommon, Cavan, Westmeath, and Meath, to raise the mass of the people to join them; and some great and alarming movements were observed among the disaffected, even in Dublin and its vicinity.* And, had the French arrived three months sooner, or had they brought with them, even at this period, a much more considerable force, though they might have been ultimately defeated, they would have occasioned a vast effusion of blood, and have exposed the country to the most imminent danger. It must be mentioned to the credit of the French officers, that they conducted themselves, while in Ireland, with the greatest propriety and moderation; and exerted themselves to the utmost to check the savage ferocity of the Irish rebels. Detached bodies of the rebels were dispersed by the Royal army, after the surrender of their allies, and in a few days an end was put to this formidable rebellion, which, had it been conducted with the same spirit, energy, and skill, with which it had been planned, would have destroyed every vestige of social order, and have established the most sanguinary despotism on the ruins of that rational and well-regulated freedom which invariably flows from a British Constitution, and a Protestant church.

On the 27th of October, however, the same frigates which had brought over Humbert's army, having once more eluded the vigilance of our cruizers, again appeared in Killala Bay, with a reinforcement of two thousand men. But, having received information of the near approach of a British squadron, they slipped their cables, and returned to France.

* *Musgrave's Memoirs*, p. 613.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

French Affairs—Farther Revolutionary projects of the Directory—Plan for subverting the constitution of Switzerland—Hypocrisy and ambition of the French government—Their present plans perfectly conformable with the avowed system of the Brissotines—Memorable report of Brissot to the Convention—Happy state of the Swiss—Stability of their government favourable to civil Liberty—Means adopted by the Directory for producing a Revolution in Switzerland—Determined neutrality of the Swiss—Dissensions among them—Patriotic conduct of the Avoyer Steiguer—Effect of disappointed ambition on Frisching, a magistrate of Berne—Attempts of the French to provoke the Swiss to violate their neutrality—They depart from their neutral system, to favour the escape of the French troops from Germany—Insurrection in the Pays de Vaud excited by the emissaries of the Directory—A Swiss army sent to suppress it—Command of the troops intrusted to General Weiss, a philosopher of the new school—His cowardly conduct—He flatters the rebels whom he was sent to subdue—He retreats and resigns his command—Vain efforts of the Swiss patriots, Steiguer, D'Erlach, and De Grosse, to rouse the government to a sense of their duty—Proclamation of the French General, Brune, on entering Switzerland—Declares the object of the Directory to be the punishment of usurpers, and the restoration of popular rights—A tool of despotism, preaching liberty—The Directory insist on the dismission of Mr. Wickham, the British minister at Berne—Mr. Wickham recalled—Seizure of the bishoprick of Basil by the French—Extensive resources of the Swiss at this period—Fully adequate to the defence of their liberties—Proclamation of the French Commissary, Mengaud—Weakness and incapacity of the government of Berne—The senate change the constitution, and adopt a more democratic form of government—Other Cantons imitate their example—Steiguer quits the Senate and repairs to the Army—The French Army advances—The French render the Swiss troops mistrustful of their Officers—Forge letters to prove D'Erlach a traitor—Cowardice of such conduct—Truce between the French and Swiss—Treacherously broken by Brune—Infamous summons sent by the French General, Schauenbourg, to the garrison of Soleure—Order issued by the government, for arming the people—Fribourg and Soleure taken by the French—Battle of Fraubrunnen—D'Erlach murdered by his troops—Gallant stand made by Steiguer—Berne falls—Bravery displayed by the Swiss women and girls—Numbers of them killed in battle—Buonaparté abuses the government of Berne for protecting Mallet du Pan—Threatens to *democratize* England in three months—The criminals in the gaols refuse to receive liberty from the French—Brune puzzled in framing a new constitution for Switzerland—Proclaims "*The Helvetic Republic one and indivisible.*"—This union resisted by the democratic cantons—They appeal in vain to the Directory—The new government put in action—The Swiss Directory and Legislative Body assembled at Arau—Disgust of the people—Impolitic conduct of the smaller cantons—

Want of union among them—Conclude a treaty with the French commander—The treaty disapproved by the Directory at Paris—The French exercise sovereign power in Switzerland—Schauenbourg attacks the canton of Underwald—Desperate action at Stanz—Signal bravery of the inhabitants—Loss on both sides—Barbarity of the French—Final reduction of Switzerland—Congress at Rastadt—Artifice of the French for protracting the negotiations—The regicide, Jean de Bry, one of their plenipotentiaries—Claims and designs of the Directory—Attempt of Bernadotte, the French ambassador, to excite an insurrection at Vienna—He displays the tri-coloured flag—His house surrounded by the populace—He threatens the people—They attack his house, pull down the flag and destroy it—Bernadotte leaves Vienna—New revolution produced by the French in the Cisalpine Republic—They destroy the *unperishable* constitution established by themselves, on the exact model of their own—Their agent, Trouvè, a writer in the Moniteur, employed to compose a new constitution for the Cisalpines—The opposition committed to prison—A new Directory formed—The most respectable member the keeper of a public brothel—That country becomes a province of France—French resolve to *revolutionize* Rome—Joseph Buonaparté sent thither for the purpose—He insists on the release of all persons confined for treason and sedition—He excites public tumults—The French General, Duphot, killed in one of them—Joseph leaves Rome—The Pope offers to avert the vengeance of France by any concessions which the Directory may dictate—Imprecates the divine assistance, by public processions, penance, and prayer—Joseph Buonaparté's cowardly abuse of the Pope—Berthier leads a French army to Rome—Engages to respect the government, and to protect property—Declares his sole object to be the punishment of the persons who killed Duphot—The Pope forbids his subjects to resist the French—The French enter Rome without opposition—They destroy the papal government, and erect a "*Roman Republic*," founded on the *Sovereignty of the People*—The Pope sent from Rome—The Vatican stripped—A general plunder takes place—Seven Consuls appointed—The inhabitants are pillaged and impoverished—Dreadful effects of this Revolution described by a Republican author—Horrible proposition made by a member of the new Jacobin Club at Rome—Priests made responsible for the peace of their districts—The French Directory again change the constitution of the Batavian Republic—Secure the citadel of Turin, and make the King of Sardinia a prisoner in his capital—An expedition sails from Toulon under the command of Buonaparté—Malta surrendered to the French by the treachery of the Knights—A British squadron, under Admiral Nelson, enters the Mediterranean in pursuit of the French—Arrives at Alexandria before them—Sails to Sicily—French land at Alexandria and take the city by storm—Nelson returns to Egypt—Battle of the Nile—Destruction of the French Fleet—Buonaparté marches to Cairo—Defeats the Mamelukes—Takes Cairo—His communication with Europe cut off—British expedition to Ostend—The troops destroy the sluices of the canal of Bruges—Are surrounded and taken by the French.

[1798-1799.] While the flame of rebellion had raged with such violence as to threaten the dismemberment of the empire, the most implacable enemies of Great Britain had, by projecting a fatal blow at

her distant possessions, prepared for *her* more splendid triumphs than she had yet achieved ; and for *themselves* more signal disasters than they had yet sustained. By this time the French Republic had not only extended her powers, but had obtained the means of consolidating and securing what she had acquired, had it been compatible with the genius of the Republic to remain satisfied while there was a power to reduce, a nation to revolutionize, or a throne to subvert. Relieved from her most powerful continental opponent by the treaty of Campo-Formio, by which the Emperor of Germany had lent his sanction to all their schemes of plunder, and all their plans of conquest, the Directory had now leisure to attend to the execution of other revolutionary projects, which the founders of the Republic had conceived, and which all their successors determined to carry into effect, whenever a favourable opportunity should occur. Switzerland, the cradle of liberty, the seat of pure unadulterated freedom, whose sons exhibited a simplicity of manners, a dignified virtue, and an heroic spirit, which formed a striking contrast with the nations around them, was the first victim which the philanthropic governors of France determined to reduce to an equality of misery with the wretched slaves whom they had subjected to their tyranny at home. 'Twas true, indeed, that hitherto they had constantly represented the Swiss as *their good neighbours* and *dear allies ;* 'twas true, that they were bound to them by solemn treaties, recently concluded, and rigidly observed, by the Swiss ;—but these were no obstacles to men, who suffered no considerations of honour, no regard for good faith, to interfere with the gratification of their ambition. Their system of political morality had, at an early period of the revolution, been clearly defined and established by their progenitor, Brissot, whose friends now enjoyed an ascendancy in the councils of the Luxembourg. In the memorable report of that demagogue, on the 22d of November, 1792, on the Convention concluded by the republican General, Montesquieu, with the people of Geneva, he observed " Brevity and clearness ought to mark our style ; Geneva shall obtain no other treaty than the communication of French principles. It is for you to examine, whether a free people *can, and ought to be bound by treaties ;* whether treaties, with any state that does not hold its power of the people, be not *indecent*, for *this*, perhaps, *is the grand secret of our revolution*, and *of the*

revolutions which are preparing." Here was a clear and explicit avowal, made officially by the chairman of a committee of the Convention to the Convention itself, almost immediately after the passing those memorable decrees, which held out a direct invitation to rebel to all the people of Europe, and evidently growing out of the same principles, that it was the object and the policy of this new-born Republic to regard no treaties, but to systematize that outrageous dishonesty, duplicity, and infidelity, that breach of good faith, and that violation of treaties, at the call of interest or ambition, with which the Carthaginians were so bitterly reproached by the Romans. True to this maxim, the Directory regarded the treaty with Switzerland as binding only so long as it suited their views to observe it. It had been particularly serviceable to them while they were at war with Austria, but now it interfered with their further schemes of conquest, which they had leisure to execute.—Of course the Swiss were no longer their *good friends and allies*, but perfidious neighbours, odious *aristocrats*, enemies to the revolution, and foes to liberty!

For the greater part of three centuries had this happy people lived, as it were, in a state of seclusion from the rest of Europe; in the bosom of their mountains, they preserved a patriarchal simplicity of manners, and, rejecting those factitious wants which luxury creates, they had within themselves the sources of comfort, prosperity, and happiness, which they diligently improved, while, strangers to war, they were passive spectators of the deadly feuds, and destructive broils, of the neighbouring powers. Their government, simple in its constitution, and admirably adapted to the genius of the people, had exhibited a degree of firmness and stability, which enabled it to remain unshaken, amidst the shocks of contending nations, and the revolution of empires. It is a striking fact, that none of the Swiss governments had experienced any variation *in their essence* from their first establishment; excepting only, perhaps, an alteration in favour of *political equality*, (of which the French proclaimed themselves the universal patrons!) as, every where, the nobility had lost their primitive advantages; and the *citizens* every where exceeded the *knights*, in numbers, influence, and power. Formed by cities rather than by provinces, the communities which held under the empire acquired

Sovereignty when they obtained independence. Their municipal regulations were then converted into a public constitution, and the corporation, composed of the inhabitants of the city, formed the *Patriciate*, and the Sovereign Council.

By arms, by treaties, by purchase, or by concessions, these infant states acquired a new territory, or extended their original domain? and all such acquisitions were made at the expence of Princes or of powerful Barons. It was by the valour and the skill of her gentlemen and principal citizens, that Switzerland threw off her feudal dependance upon Germany, and all its concomitant oppressions. The subjects of the different cantons to whom the philosophic legislators of regenerated France professed a determination to restore their *primitive* freedom, and *the rights of their ancestors*, would, in the event of such *regeneration* become *serfs* again; restored to their primitive condition, they would become the slavish vassals of despotic lords, without security for either their liberty, or their lives. A hundred districts now subjected to the Swiss government were indebted to that subjection for the freedom which they enjoyed. The immunities which any province possessed, previous to its incorporation with one of the cantons, was carefully preserved. If slaves, they were emancipated; if free, they retained their privileges;—such was, universally, the spirit of the treaty which *de facto* and *de jure*, gave them new Sovereigns.*—These remarks apply equally to the Pays de Vaud, and to the aristocratic canton of Berne, as to the more popular and democratic cantons.

The Republican government of France, to whom this state of things, in a neighbouring country, was a standing reproach, exerted every art to destroy it. While the most vague, false, and ridiculous charges were, occasionally, preferred against the Swiss, the usual instruments of revolution, jacobinical emissaries, were employed, demon like, to excite jealousy, where harmony alone had hitherto prevailed, and to stir up discontent in the very seat of happiness. But though a revolutionary club, composed of outcasts and vagabonds from Switzerland, had been

* *Historical Essay on the dissolution of the Helvetic League, and the destruction of Helvetic Liberty.* By Mallet du Pan.

established at Paris, under the protection of the Constituent Assembly, and of certain natives of the Pays de Vaud, yet the first efforts to propagate the new principles in that country proved abortive; and a partial disturbance, raised by the disaffected, was speedily suppressed by the active vigilance of the magistrates, assisted by the marked disapprobation of the inhabitants in general. But the avowed determination of the Swiss government not to be diverted from their rigid system of neutrality, (adopted without a sufficient attention to its consequences, or to the peculiar circumstances of the times) by injuries however grave, by insults however pointed,—a determination to which they were exhorted most earnestly to adhere, by the mistaken, and often ill-directed, humanity and benevolence of Louis the Sixteenth, operated as an encouragement to the jacobins of France to persevere in their unprincipled efforts. By their exertions, assisted by Mr. Barthelemi, the French Ambassador, dissensions were produced among the principal persons in the country. The chief magistrate, the virtuous, and truly enlightened Steiguer, became an object of suspicion and attack to a faction, which chose for its leader M. Frisching, a magistrate of Berne, no less attached, than Steiguer himself, to the constitution of his country, and distinguished by his eloquence, his knowledge, and capacity. But, incensed at being reduced to play a second part on the political stage; inflamed with resentment, animosity, and jealousy, against the state; and irritated at seeing another in possession of a dignity to which he aspired himself; he suffered his ambition to subdue his patriotism; his passions to prevail over his reason; and, melancholy instance of human weakness, resolved rather to let the Republic perish, than suffer it to be saved by his rival!

So far were the Swiss from departing from their neutrality in prejudice to the French, their desire to deprive the French of all possible pretext to prefer such a charge against them had led them to commit a breach of that neutrality to the prejudice of the Austrians, when at war with France. When the victorious Archduke had wrested from Moreau the spoils of victory, and had compelled him to retrace his steps through the country, which his army had desolated, the republican hordes, hard pressed by the Austrians, and by the peasantry of Suabia,

on whom they had exercised the most wanton cruelty, and the most rapacious extortion, were forced to fall back upon Switzerland, and were reduced to the necessity of either surrendering at discretion, or of seeking to escape by violating the neutrality of the Swiss, the Helvetic territory was suffered, without opposition, to be overrun by these *soldiers of liberty*, these *citizen-soldiers*, these *protectors of the poor*, whose rapacity had not spared a single cottage. For twelve successive days Switzerland patiently submitted to tolerate these bands of fugitives, to supply them with provisions, and to escort their baggage-waggons, in which their arms, and the fruits of their plunder, were confusedly mixed with the sick and the wounded. The pretended baggage of this hideous procession consisted of the wardrobes, beds, golden crosses, and shoe-buckles, of the female villagers of Suabia; and of articles of every description which they had stolen from the gentlemen's seats, from the churches, monasteries, and villages. In vain did the imperial general, De la Tour, complain to the Swiss government of their conduct; his complaints were disregarded, and the directorial army were suffered to escape with their booty.

This departure from *neutral* justice originated in the same motive which, unhappily, influenced all the proceedings of the Swiss government, at this period, and which defeated all the views and designs of those true patriots whose efforts were invariably directed to preserve their country from destruction. This was a fatal desire to avert the wrath of the Directory by conciliatory measures; that is, by mean and unworthy sacrifices; by clogging the wheels of government at the very time when it was necessary to increase their velocity; and by the adoption of revolutionary proceedings, at a moment when it was the peculiar duty of the government to encourage, in the great body of the people, that marked aversion from revolutionary principles, which they had, with very few exceptions, manifested.

The Directory succeeded, by their emissaries, in producing an insurrection in the Pays de Vaud, and they sent one of their ruffian generals, Menard, at the beginning of 1798, with a body of troops, to the assistance of their allies, the insurgents. The Swiss government assem-

bled, with expedition, a formidable body of troops; but, by a strange infatuation, they gave the command of this army to General Weiss, a philosopher of the new school, who, without any fixed principles, and even without wishing to see the effects of the French revolution extended to his native country, had courted and praised every regicide from Brissot to Buonaparté. Entrusted with full powers, having orders to act with promptness and decision; provided with a force of twenty thousand men, an ample train of artillery, and a sufficient supply of military stores, while sixty thousand loyal inhabitants were ready to join him, in the persuasion that the influence of his name, his pamphlets, and his philosophy, would subdue the rebels without firing a musquet; he remained a whole week in a state of inactivity; suffered a revolutionary committee to sit in the very place in which he had fixed his quarters; entered into a parley with the members; and when, encouraged by his conduct, they formed a plan for seizing the Castle of Lausanne, instead of securing their persons, as it was his duty to do, he contented himself with apprizing them, that such an attempt would be an act of high treason, for which they must answer with their heads. As if fearful of intimidating these rebels too much, he addressed them in the soothing language of fraternal friendship.—"Such a measure, gentlemen," said this prating General, "would be perfectly impotent in advancing your interests; and, considered merely as it would affect yourselves, it would, in no degree, counterbalance the consequences which might ensue. I invite you, *most amicably*, to judge of me by my *known principles*, and by a long series of proceedings, which have gained me *the confidence of different parties*, and even *the marked good wishes of that external authority* whose favour you now solicit." From such a commander what could be expected? Nothing but the disgrace which ensued. Determined not to fight the French, and not daring to punish the insurgents, he first retreated, and afterwards deserted his post, and resigned his command without orders, and without permission. It would seem that the same spirit had infected the government of Berne; for, notwithstanding the sage admonitions, and patriotic remonstrances, of the venerable Steiguer, of the gallant D'Erlach, the intelligent De Grosse, (the intrepid defender of the Dutch fortress of Grave, in the winter of 1796) and of some other magistrates and officers of superior

understanding and of determined minds, the majority of the government ultimately imitated the example of Weiss. Wavering, indecisive, and timid, they suffered the French to delude them by their professions, while they invaded the country with their arms. If their native spirit returned for a moment, and led to the adoption of some wise and vigorous resolution, it was soon suffered to evaporate, and the offspring which it produced was crushed at its birth.

On the twenty-eighth of February, the French General, Brune, (who was a printer before the revolution, and one of the most active of the Jacobins during its progress) published a proclamation, addressed to the people of Switzerland, exhibiting the usual mixture of revolutionary cant and hypocritical falsehoods. "My brave soldiers," said this tool of the Directory, "are your friends, your brethren; their sole desire, in punishing tyranny, is to assist you in the destruction of its impious yoke. Amidst the crimes of your oligarchy, I expected some returns to reason, *some symptoms of remorse.* Neither *ambition* nor *cupidity* shall dishonour our proceedings; my only object in entering your country is to punish the guilty usurpers of your sovereignty. Dismiss all alarm for *your personal safety, your property, your religious worship,* and *your political independence.* * These are all GUARANTEED TO YOU by the French government. Be free, the French Republic exhorts you, nature orders you, to be free."

Before this period, the French government, who had exerted every effort to provoke the Swiss to some act *committed,* or *omitted,* which might afford them something like a pretext for the commencement of hostilities, had, in direct violation of that independence which they professed to respect, insisted, in a dictatorial manner, on the dismission

* This army of *butchers* maintained the *personal safety* of the Swiss by murdering men, women, and children; and defended *their property* by the indiscriminate plunder of rich and poor. A person, (known to M. Mallet du Pan) who had been robbed by this army, complained to the commanding officer of the place, who expressed his astonishment at finding that he had a coat left to his back. "If" (said he) "the theft had been committed by my soldiers, they would have left you nothing but your shirt.

of Mr. Wickham, the British envoy.—But before the Swiss government had time to decide, Mr. Wickham received his letters of recal, and accordingly left the country; to the great disappointment of the Directory. Emboldened, however, by repeated instances of base submission to their will, the Directory ordered their agents to demand the release of all the criminals who had been imprisoned or banished on a charge of sedition, or conspiracy, the expulsion of the emigrants, and the renunciation of all military orders, which the Swiss officers had received from the King of France.—These demands, to the eternal disgrace of the government, met with instant compliance. The French, finding this means of provocation could not avail them, had next recourse to a direct act of hostility, by seizing the Bishopric of Basil, in violation of the treaty of 1792, by which the independence and neutrality of that canton were expressly guaranteed.

It must not be supposed that this weakness on the part of the Swiss government, in neglecting to vindicate the wounded honour, and to avenge the injured interests, of their country, arose from any want of the means for opposing a successful resistance to the French Republic. Switzerland contained a people of soldiers, a great number of experienced officers, well-stored arsenals, and formidable posts; Berne, alone, had at her disposal an army of 35,000 men, embodied, disciplined, and brave; her magazines were full; her treasury was equal to the support of her army for several months; it was in the power of the league to double that force; and, had they sustained any defeats, the impenetrable retreats which the country afforded would have supplied fresh means of resistance. Corn might have been drawn from Germany; the government were certain of obtaining subsidies to enable them to continue the war; they would have fixed the resolution of the German empire; and the Emperor would have been interested in assisting a valuable neighbour against the enemies of his crown and people.—This atrocious aggression, repelled with the energy of despair, might have given an impulse to all Europe; the first advantage obtained by the Swiss would have opened to them a frontier, wholly unprovided with fortified towns. At every step they advanced on the territory of France, after passing that frontier, they would have found, in the adjacent departments, inha-

bitants oppressed with hatred for their oppressors, mindful of their injuries, and anxious to shake off their yoke. From Besançon to Lyon, and from Lyon to the shores of the Mediterranean, they would have raised a conflagration still more dreadful than that which had raged with so much fury in La Vendée. These resources were exhibited to the public, but without effect; the majority of the government were less anxious to devise means for supporting the war, than pretexts for evading it. *

Mengaud, the French Commissary, specially appointed to superintend and systematize the plunder of this devoted country, anxious to follow the example of the general, published a rodomontade much in the same style.—He admitted, however, with more candour than Le Brune had displayed, that he was an object of hatred to the Swiss, but he expressed his resolution to address them, *in the language of reason and truth!* his notions of which seem to have been perfectly congenial with those of M. Le Brune. "To regenerate Switzerland," said the revolutionary logician, "is not to disturb her repose. Who are base enough to tarnish the glory of the French armies? Is there any man in the whole world, except the government of Berne and their adherents, who does not acknowledge their generosity, which is equal to their valour. Do not take up arms against them; they are brothers who join you in resisting the common enemy. Theirs *will not be chance blows*; they will not fall upon *the deluded citizen*, upon the *peaceable farmer*. The French army will be terrible only to the few perverse rulers who persist in the display of their phrenetic rage. Do you wish for war, when we offer you peace?"

Instead of being roused to a sense of duty, and to exertions of vigour, by the repeated outrages of the French, the Swiss government continued to manifest the most contemptible weakness and incapacity which ever disgraced the councils of a State. Adopting the very measures of *conciliation* and *concession*, which the Opposition in this country had pressed the British Cabinet to adopt, in respect of the Irish rebels, they

* Mallet du Pan's Historical Essay, &c.

made the vain attempt to prevent a *revolution* by a *radical reform*; in other words, they made the revolution themselves. After an *amicable* conference with the enemy, the Senate of Berne, by the assumption of an authority which it did not possess, passed a sentence of annihilation on the existing constitution, which it changed into a species of democracy, possessing neither strength nor stability; and an example, at once so foolish and so absurd, was immediately followed by the governments of the cantons of Zurich, Lucerne, Soleure, and Schauffhausen. In the three last of these places, the people, more wise and more enlightened than their rulers, endeavoured to prevent this senseless act of political suicide, committed in the true spirit of cowardice, in order to avert a blow which they wanted courage to repel.

The venerable Steiguer having in vain endeavoured, in his civil capacity, to stem the fatal torrent which threatened to overwhelm the land of his fathers, reproached the Senate, as the agents of corruption, or the slaves of cowardice, and repaired to the army, firmly resolved to save his country, or to perish with her.

Meanwhile the French troops continued to advance into the heart of the country, and the most seditious and inflammatory hand-bills were circulated among the Swiss soldiery; the object of which was to inspire them with distrust of their officers, and to weaken them by dissensions. The French had even the baseness to fabricate letters, purporting to be written by General D'Erlach, in which that officer promised to betray his men, and to occasion their defeat.* It is worthy of remark, that these *invincible heroes* of the *great nation*, as they styled themselves, whose *humanity* was equal to their *valour*, never dared to meet the brave Swiss fairly in the field, nor to encounter them but with superior numbers.

Brune, not having yet received his expected reinforcements, nor sufficiently diffused his jacobinical poison, had contrived to amuse the new regency of Berne with proposals for a negotiation; and to obtain

* Mallet du Pan, ubi Suprà.

the consent of these pusillanimous or corrupt betrayers of their country to a truce for fifteen days, which was to expire on the morning of the *fourth* of March. In the mean time, another French General, Schauenbourg, had entered Switzerland, with 22,000 men, which he brought with him from the Rhine. Having, at length, completed their military arrangements, these two minions of the Directory, as if resolved to prove themselves worthy of the confidence of such masters, basely determined to attack the Swiss *before the expiration of the truce.* Accordingly, in the night of the *first* of March, Schauenbourg assailed some of the outposts, which, though thus taken by surprize, were long most gallantly defended by seven hundred and fifty mountaineers of Oberland, against seven thousand eight hundred disciplined troops of France. After murdering a number of female peasants, the leader of this banditti pushed forward to Soleure, and sent to the garrison a summons which has been justly characterized as an unparalleled model of savage ferocity. It is, indeed, scarcely to be conceived, that a man, who had been born a gentleman, and bred up in the school for honour, (for Schauenbourg was a major in the French army under the Monarchy) could so far forget the principles which he had imbibed in his youth, as to disgrace both his birth and his education, by subscribing his name to such an atrocious composition. "The Executive Directory," said he, "has ordered me to take possession of Soleure, and to apprize you that, if I experience the smallest resistance; if a single drop of blood be shed, the members of the government of Soleure will answer for it with their lives and property; and I shall inflict the most signal, and the most inexorable, justice; make known *the will of the Directory* to the Members of your Government; I give you *half an hour* to come to a decision; when that time shall have expired, I shall burn the city, and put the garrison to the sword." It was in this style of a Tartar inflicting chastisement on his rebellious slaves, observed one who had studied the character and genius of the French Revolution, its founders and agents, more deeply, and more successfully, than any of his contemporaries, that the Directory, and their Janissaries, treated a nation of freemen, their neutral neighbours, their allies! It was thus that philosophy respected the laws of war, the laws of humanity, and the laws of nations, by threatening

to massacre peaceable Republicans on the smoking ruins of their habitations, in case they should dare to defend themselves! The Swiss government, the seat of which exhibited every symptom of anarchy and weakness, at last issued an order, which, a week sooner, had sufficed to save the country, for arming the whole population of the country, by the levy of the *Landsthurm*. But the imbecility of this wretched government still prevailed over the patriotic resolution of the people; they knew not how to employ the resources with which they were now supplied in abundance; and, as usual, activity, zeal, and energy, in a bad cause, triumphed over indolence, hesitation, and half-measures, displayed in a good cause. The French pressed forward with eagerness; Fribourgh, and So'eure, soon fell into their hands.—A desperate, but irregular, resistance was, indeed, made at different places, particularly at Fraubrunnen, at Ulteren, and at Granholz; but it proved ineffectual. The troops being disheartened by mistrust, weakened by divisions, and oppressed by an immense superiority of numbers, iniquity prevailed, and virtue sunk in the conflict. The malignant genius of regicidal France triumphed, and the liberties of Switzerland were destroyed. On the sixth of March, Berne surrendered by capitulation.—On the day preceding the fall of Berne, the Swiss met the French at the village of Fraubrunnen, nine miles from the capital. The Swiss were commanded by the Avoyer Steiguer. D'Erlach, the most steady friend of his country, with his guards, and four Colonels, having been murdered by the people, who had been taught, by the infamous machinations of the French, to believe them faithless to their trust, and traitors to the State. The venerable Steiguer, at the age of seventy, decorated with the great order of the Black Eagle, but still more adorned by his virtues, now led his countrymen to battle. The action was obstinate and bloody; but the superiority of the French cavalry, and light artillery, decided the fate of the day. The Bernese retreated three miles, and renewed the action. No sooner had they been driven from one position, than they took up another; and it was not till after five successive engagements that, on the evening of the fifth of March, the enemy arrived under the walls of Berne, leaving the road strewed with the bodies of the victors and of the vanquished. A gallant band of youths, who revered the virtues, and partook of the sentiments, of their venerable commander,

followed him to the field. They fought, as men, so animated, by the double stimulus of patriotism and friendship, might be expected to fight. Though several of them had not reached their sixteenth year, their cause gave them courage, and their spirit strength, far beyond their age. They fought around their chief, and, bravely refusing quarter, fell with their swords wreaking with the blood of the enemies and tyrants of their country. It is over the tombs of such heroes as these, and not over the bier of a Montgomery, the prison of a La Fayette, or the scaffold of a Despard, that the tear of genuine patriotism will fall.—Sacred be the memory of these generous youths;—to them let true patriots of every soil look up as a fit model and a bright example, while the historic muse transmits their public virtues and gallant deeds to future ages.

"O fortunati *omnes!* si quid mea carmina possint."

The wreck of the Bernese army reached the mountains of Emmenthal. Steiguer having effected his escape retired into the interior of Austria. He afterwards repaired to Berlin, in the hope of inducing the King of Prussia to stand forward in defence of his persecuted country. In these patriotic efforts, however, he unfortunately failed.—At a subsequent period he joined the Russian army under Korsakow, when it entered Switzerland, and having witnessed this last vain effort to rescue his native land from slavery and oppression, he retired to Augsburgh, and there died of a broken heart.*

Amidst the last agonies of expiring freedom, some genuine sparks of

* It is lamentable to observe the extreme carelessness, and inattention, displayed, by English writers, in their relation of historical facts, occurring in foreign countries. In a *second* edition of the Annual Register for 1798, printed in 1806, (and published for Ottridge and Co.) it is stated, alluding to the action of March the 5th,—"In this battle perished, among other brave patriots, the illustrious Steiguer; he fell, as he often declared it to be his determination, fighting against France, for the liberty of Switzerland." p. 81. Yet, early in 1798, a publication, translated from the French, appeared in London, entitled, "A Short Account of the Invasion of Switzerland, by the French, in a Letter from M. Mallet du Pan, to M. De M * * * * *;" in which Mr. Steiguer's escape into Germany was mentioned. Besides, it might have been ascertained by a reference to any of the foreign accounts of the Invasion of Switzerland.

true Helvetic spirit, some distinctive traits of noble heroism, besides those just noticed, appeared worthy to be recorded in history.

Upwards of eight hundred women took up arms in the *Landsthurm*, or general levy, and bore all the fire of the enemy in the last actions, At *Fraubrunnen* two hundred and sixty women and girls received the enemy with scythes, pitchforks, and pickaxes ; one hundred and eighty were killed ; and one of them, whose name was *Glar*, had two daughters, and three grand daughters, who fought by her side.—These six heroines all perished.—The same scene was displayed at Newenegg, Laupen, and Lengnau. In the battalion of Oberland, which defended the last of these places, a father was seen fighting in company with three of his sons, and seven of his grandsons, all of whom lost their lives.

Effingner, a member of the senate, an old man of seventy, joined the army, in the evening of the fourth of March, with his sword in his hand, and a brace of pistols in his belt ; he led a company of grenadiers into battle, was wounded, taken prisoner, and expired a few days after, in a military hospital at *Soleure*, in which *Schauenbourg* had the baseness to confine him, in the midst of dying, and dead, soldiers. Another Senator, Mr. *Herbert*, blew his brains out with a pistol, rather than survive the ruin of the State.

A young peasant, of Avenche, aged twenty, was threatened to be put to death by the French, unless he would take up arms against his Sovereign. He firmly refused to become a rebel, and had the boldness to add to his refusal, that *Buonaparté*, in crossing Switzerland,* had

* M. Mallet du Pan, having exposed the infamous conduct of Buonaparté in Italy, by the publication of facts, which the Republican General never dared to deny ; the latter abused the Government of *Berne* for affording him protection ; and, in order to avert the rage of this man, an *illegal* sentence of banishment was pronounced, by the Secret Council, against the best friend, and most strenuous defender, of the country. This scandalous proceeding, however, had not the desired effect. At the end of 1797, Buonaparté crossed Switzerland, on his way to Rastadt. Before he left Milan, he had, on the 11th of November, told the Grisons, in answer to their timid complaints, on the incorporation of the Valtaline with the Cisalpine Republic :—"The French Republic will afford you her protection, so long as you shall conduct yourself towards her with those attentions which are due to the most powerful people in Europe." He

occasioned all the misfortunes of the country. He had no sooner said this than he was carried to the place of execution, and shot, without having deigned to solicit forgiveness.

French liberty, it has been remarked, is so odious and vile, that the very criminals themselves rejected it with scorn. The insurgents of the *Pays de Vaud* having released ten malefactors who were employed on the public works at Yverdun, and honoured them with a fraternal

did not, however, in the course of his journey, display the benevolence of a protector, but the airs of a morose and malignant despot. Every word he uttered was either a boast or an insult. At Geneva, he declared that '*he would democratize England in three months.* The Senate of Berne had prepared honours, a ball, deputations, and a change of horses, for him; he rejected them all with proud disdain, leaving nothing on his way but marks of ill-humour and contempt. Some few prostitutes and *sans culottes*, who presented him with flowers, and compliments, at Lausanne, were the only persons whom he deemed deserving of his attention.

But at Basil he changed his tone. A fellow of the name of *Dufour*, who had become a General, and a Commander, at Huninguen, addressed him in the following terms:—"I will not compare you to the Turennes, and the Montecuculis, you have surpassed them; but I will exclaim, with all Republicans, Buonaparté is the first man in the world!"—One *Buxtorf*, a burgomaster, who shone equally as an orator as he did as a politician, even improved on the eloquence of Dufour.—"The laurel of victory immortalizes the hero!"—said he to Buonaparté.—"By serving liberty, your blessings extend even to us. It is not, then, admiration that forms the object of our mission, *it is gratitude.* You must have read, in every face in Switzerland that expression of content which is the reward of so much uneasiness;—you will sign the happiness of Switzerland, at Rastadt." This miserable stupidity intoxicated the hero, who sententiously declared, that there existed only two Republics in Switzerland—Geneva without laws, and Basil converted into a counting-house, and workshop, for the revolution. Mallet du Pan, from whose Historical Essay these observations were taken, thus delineating, with the pencil of truth, the character of Buonaparté, while pronouncing, on the ruins of Genoa and Venice, sentence on all neutral States, divulged, to Europe, the mysteries of the Luxembourg. Such audacity, united with such perfidy, and hypocrisy so base, combined with usurpations so daring, proclaimed the dissolution of every social system.—A revolutionist from passion, a conquerer by subornation, unjust from instinct, outrageous in victory, mercenary in his protection;—an inexorable despoiler bribed by the victims whose credulity he betrayed;—as formidable from his arts as from his arms;—disgracing courage by premeditated violations of public faith;—crowning immorality with the palms of philosophy, and oppression with the cap of liberty; this successful Corsican, brandishing, with one hand, the torch of *Erostratus*, and with the other the sabre of *Genseric*,* formed a plan for burying Switzerland beneath the ruins of Italy.

* "Because Catiline had a strong mind, was he, therefore, a less detestable villain? And

embrace, the captives declared that they would never accept their liberty from rebels. And when the prison doors were shut against them they repaired to Berne, where they surrendered themselves, and were sent back to their place of confinement.

On the third of March, Schauenbourg signified to the council of Berne, 'that, apprized by certain intelligence that most of the persons of both sexes, confined in the prisons of that town, were only deprived of their liberty on account of their attachment to France, he required that they should all be released, else the magistrates themselves should undergo the same treatment as had been experienced by *these friends of freedom*.' The French General's letter was read to the prisoners, to the number of a hundred, and it was left to their choice, to join Schauenbourg, to return to their homes, or to contribute to the defence of the State;—they all chose the last, and most of them were killed at *Fraubrunnen*.

The scenes of horror which were displayed after the triumph of French arms and of French intrigues, baffle all description, and almost exceed credibility. Disgusted as I was with the bloody annals of the Irish Rebellion, just dismissed from my attention, the conduct of the French in Switzerland surpassed even those in atrocity, and inspire the mind, if possible, with still greater horror and disgust. All that tyranny the most oppressive, rapine the most insatiate, cruelty the most sanguinary, lust the most unbridled, could inflict, did that devoted country experience.

was it, therefore, proper to paint the crimes of a ruffian in the same colours as the exploits of a hero?"

J. J. Rousseau's Lettress sur les Spectacles.

"A great difference ought to be made between the hero who dyes the soil with his blood in defence of his country, and the intrepid banditti who consign to death the innocent and unfortunate inhabitants of a foreign land."

Raynal, *Histoirre Philosophique Pet olitique des deux Index*, Liv. I.

"Before philosophy," adds Mallet du Pan, "had assumed the Revolutionary casque, she held such language as this:—Now, the two authorities here quoted have, no doubt, lost their credit."

Having, by the conquest of Berne, reduced all the larger cantons, Mr. Brune's next care was to give to the country, whose freedom he had destroyed, some new constitution, formed after the French model. As, however, he had not been supplied with one ready made, from the celebrated "*pigeon holes*" of the Abbè Sieyes, and as the formation of a new constitution was a task not quite so easy as the composition of a revolutionary manifesto or harangue, Brune was at a loss how to act. His first intention was to divide Switzerland into *three* Republics, the Rhodanic, the Helvetian, and the Republic of William Tell;* but this whimsical notion was soon changed for another plan, more conformable to the views and interests of France; and it was resolved to unite all the cantons under one government, and to give to it the appellation of the *Helvetic Republic, one and indivisible.* As the Directory had hitherto limited its threats to the *aristocratic* cantons, and had made their *tyranny* the pretext for attacking them, the democratic cantons had been lulled into a false security, from which they were now roused by the report of this projected union. Frank, open, and honest, themselves, they were still unwilling to suspect others of hypocrisy, deceit, and fraud; and, therefore, they resolved to apply to the French Directory, in order to ascertain their intention respecting themselves. In the united address of the small cantons of Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glaris, they declared that none of them could believe that it was the intention of the French, or consistent with their principles, to disturb the small democratical cantons in the exercise of a liberty which the French nation professed to have had in view to give to the rest of Switzerland. They besought Brune to give them a positive declaration, that the Directory had no design to disturb them in the exercise of their religion, their independence, their liberty, and their political constitution. Their democratic government, they told him, possessed their love and attachment, as a good mother which had for ages promoted their happiness. It had consecrated, as its principles, in all their purity, the rights of man, and the sovereignty of the people; it was, therefore, they remarked, in perfect consonance with the government adopted by

* *History of the Invasion of Switzerland by the French,* &c. By Henry Zschokke.—English Translation, p. 204.

the French Republic.* This was certainly the strongest appeal that could be made to the agent of a nation, which had murdered its king, subverted all its ancient institutions, proscribed its nobles, and massacred its citizens, on the scaffold, and in the field, for the purpose of consecrating the *rights of man*, and *the sovereignty of the people*. But neither the Directory, nor their emissaries, military or diplomatic, suffered any regard for consistency of principle, or of conduct, to interfere with their views of conquest, or projects of subjection. Brune, a week after this address had been presented, (on the 22d of March) issued his mandate, from his head-quarters at Berne, for the establishment of an Helvetic Republic, one and indivisible;† and ordered all the cantons to send deputies, without delay, to Arau, to form the legislative body.

* Idem, p. 199. The representative of these cantons, having truly explained the principles of their government, proceeded to make the following strong remarks:—

"Such, in the abstract, are the bases of our constitutions. Do they not rest upon principles similar to those on which your government is founded? How then can you have a wish to annihilate our happiness, by infringing our political organization? What can be your motives to do it, and what advantages can you expect to derive from it?

"Supposing even that you had the power, we believe that your justice will not permit you to employ it for the introduction among us, by force of *a constitution, which scarcely a hundredth part of our citizens will be able to comprehend.*

"We are a people of herdsmen and mountaineers, who, faithful to the simple manners of our ancestors, have been able hitherto to live with few wants, and to content ourselves with our happy mediocrity. The small resources of our cantons would scarcely supply salaries for the great number of public functionaries which the new constitution would give us. Resources must be found in the fortunes of individuals, which, being for the most part very moderate, would, in a short time, be exhausted, and this inevitable consequence would lead to the speedy and total ruin of our country.

"Do not, then, be surprised, citizen Directors, if the certainty of this afflicting prospect leads us to abhor this new order of things, and to regard it as a burthen, the weight of which exceeds our strength."

† But a few days before, Brune had assured the cantons of Lucerne and Unterwalden, that "*The great nation*," was only desirous to preserve its antient relations with them, and had no hostile intentions towards them whatever.

As the smaller cantons inherited a considerable portion of the spirit of their fathers, they refused to obey this command of an insolent foreigner, who presumed, without the smallest pretext, to rob them of their birthright, to destroy those liberties which they had enjoyed for centuries, and to dictate the form of government which it was his pleasure they should adopt. The larger cantons, however, having accepted the new constitution, and taken the oath prescribed to them, the legislative body assembled, a Directory was appointed, and the government put into action.

Still had the smaller cantons, inadequate as their force was to cope with the French, without other assistance, but acted with unanimity and wisdom, directing their efforts, jointly, to the attainment of one common object, they might have succeeded in this unequal conflict, and have inflicted severe vengeance on the invaders of their territory, and on the assassins of their fellow-citizens. United, they would have had a force sufficient, if conducted with skill and prudence, to make an impression on some part of the extended line of the French army: and any success gained over the enemy would have speedily increased the number of their adherents, as, although the leading persons in the larger cantons had adopted the new constitution, the great body of the people were extremely averse from it, and would cheerfully have shaken off the yoke, which they had, most reluctantly, been compelled to wear.—But, instead of this union of object and of effort, the smaller cantons were divided among themselves, and each sought rather to provide for its own individual defence, than to make one general exertion in support of the general cause. After one portion of their force had taken possession of the town of Lucerne, which they evacuated on the approach of the enemy, and maintained several partial actions with the French, in which they were generally successful, they found that even their victories must ultimately prove ruinous to them, by the gradual diminution of their force. They concluded a treaty, (on the 6th of May,) with Schauenbourg, (who had now succeeded Brune in the chief command of the army,) by which they agreed to accede to the new constitution, on condition that no armed Frenchmen should set foot on their territory.

The French Directory, when informed of this treaty, expressed their displeasure at it, and, while they ratified it, secretly resolved to break it the moment a favourable opportunity should occur; well assured of the fidelity of the Swiss legislative body, which, in the name of France, rivetted, at Arau, the chains of their country; reigning, in the Helvetic Directory, by means of their creatures, *Ochs* and *La Harpe*, the regency of Paris determined either to subject the democracies of the Alps to their despotism, or else to exterminate them.

In consequence of this determination, so perfectly compatible with the *new morality* which constantly influenced the conduct of the rulers of the French Republic, from Robespierre to Buonaparté, orders were immediately transmitted to Schauenbourg, to get rid of the treaty of the 6th of May, in any way he could; and, at all events, to force his way into that cradle of Helvetic liberty, before the approach of winter.

During this time, if any of the Swiss had been really deceived by the declarations of the French, that, in the new constitution which they had compelled them, at the point of the bayonet, to accept, they had no other object in view than the establishment of their liberty and independence on a solid and durable basis, they had very soon reason to censure their own credulity, and to deplore its fatal effects. When the Swiss Directory began to act, it was natural to suppose that there would be an end to the revolutionary despotism of French Janissaries, and that martial law would yield to constitutional decrees. But this supposition, if it were ever entertained, was proved to be chimerical, for no sooner did the Directory begin to exercise acts of imperial sovereignty, than they were plainly told, that they were placed there merely to superintend the political economy of the country, and as to all transactions of importance, and matters of state, they must implicitly follow the directions of the French government. And to prove that it was intended to enforce this assumed right of dictation, the French Commissary proceeded to seize all the public treasures, and all the stores of every denomination belonging to the State, and sent them to France.

At the beginning of August, Schauenbourg settled his plan of proceeding, and began his preparations for carrying it into effect; for which purpose he received the assistance of the Directory of Arau. In order to obtain a pretext for the projected attack and invasion of the democratic cantons, he deemed it necessary to provoke an insurrection. With this view, he called upon them to take the civic oath of obedience to the new constitution, imposed, says the best of the Swiss writers, on Switzerland, by forty-six thousand French assassins, who had set up for professors of political law. It was easy to foresee the effects of this measure on a religious people, whose consciences, hitherto, had been as free as their laws. Troops of slaves, without morals and without a God, corrupt and servile legislators, remorseless tyrants, superior to shame, and above punishment, may dictate, receive, alter, and overthrow, year after year, *unperishable* constitutions, to which they have sworn obedience;—but this disgraceful traffic, this impious trade of perjury, was still unknown in the pure region of the higher Alps. When they placed their unfortunate inhabitants between perjury and death, the Directory, and their general, rightly calculated that the choice would not be doubtful. In fact, great numbers rejected the proffered oath. The cantons of Appenzell, Schwitz, Uri, Unterwalden, Zug, and a great part of the canton of Lucerne, were unanimous in their refusal to take it. In order to compel a compliance with the Directorial Mandate, threatening proclamations, the usual forerunners of French cruelties, were issued, and every art of deception and intrigue was exerted.—"If you do not pay implicit obedience to the decree of the Directory, within the term prescribed, I will enter the *rebellious districts* with my army, and will inflict a severe and exemplary punishment on the *guilty*." Such was the language addressed by Schauenbourg to these Republicans of five hundred years standing! But, as the monstrous insolence of this ruffian failed to intimidate the generous descendants of William Tell, he strengthened the division of his army, stationed at Lucerne, with fifteen new battalions, armed some gun-boats on the neighbouring lake, and, accompanied with a large train of artillery, set out, on the seventh of September, to carry his sanguinary designs into execution.

The lower part of the canton of Unterwald, which borders on the lake of Lucerne, was now destined to be the scene of crimes the most atrocious, and of courage the most heroic. While Schauenbourg attacked the Swiss in front, he turned their flanks, by sending one of his columns by Oberland, and over mount Brunig. The people of Unterwald, with no forces but their own, a few pieces of cannon, and their natural entrenchments, repelled the first attacks of their oppressors, on the eighth of September; but, the next day, the French penetrated into the valley of Stanz, with a powerful force; and cannonaded the capital of the district. For thirteen hours, the inhabitants defended themselves with the most desperate courage; men, women, priests, and children, animated with one common sentiment of purest patriotism, rushed into the thickest of the fight, and evinced the ardour of the love which they bore to their country, by the energy of their efforts in support of her cause. Superior numbers ultimately prevailed; and fifteen hundred Swiss were killed, and two thousand wounded, in this gallant struggle for expiring liberty. Upwards of two thousand of the French, and a great number of officers, who were destroyed by hatchets, or fragments of rocks, the only weapons with which many of the Swiss were supplied—paid with their lives the forfeit of this criminal attempt on the freedom of an independent and unoffending people. There was no enormity, however atrocious, which the base leader of this banditti did not commit in these desolated vallies; —numbers of their peaceable citizens were massacred, in cold blood, in their houses, and even in their churches; both sexes were involved in one common destruction; and the whole country, given up to the ravages of fire and the sword, was soon reduced to a shapeless mass of ruins, and the scene of plenty and content was converted into a hideous desert, stained with the blood of its late inhabitants. The barbarous invaders either destroyed or carried off all the cattle, which formed the only means of subsistence, and the only wealth of the country. As if anxious to outdo the blackest deeds which mark the blood-stained annals of the Goths and Vandals, inflated with success, and foaming with rage, at the brave resistance which they had experienced, they laid whole towns and villages in ashes, ravished the wives and daughters of a virtuous and uncorrupted peasantry, and left not a cottage standing in many square leagues of country. Great God! when this wide-extended ruin and

desolation are contemplated, achieved, as they were, by wretches who profane thy name, murder thy ministers, disfigure thy works, and violate thine altars, may it not be permitted to imprecate thy vengeance on their heads; to beseech thee to stop them in their criminal career, to supplicate thee to make their destructive machinations recoil upon themselves, and to call upon thee to give an awful lesson to mankind, by inflicting a dreadful punishment on the vilest monsters that ever disgraced human nature? An age of labour will not suffice to repair the desolation and misery which the French Directory and their agents, in a few hours, spread over this unhappy land.

Schauenbourg, not content with having accomplished this bloody purpose, by means from which honour, as well as humanity, would have revolted, resolved further to insult the Swiss, by calling on the Directory at Arau to partake his joy and his *triumph*.—"Victory," said he, "decided in favour of *the Republicans*"—that is, in favour of men, who, without a pretext for interference, much less a cause for attack, had invaded and destroyed the oldest and freest Republic in Europe; murdering her faithful inhabitants, and desolating her fruitful plains! They even demolished the very monuments of her national independence, and her national glory:—they pulled down the monument erected in honour of William Tell, the founder of Swiss liberty, and the chapel built in commemoration of the victory of Morat. The French General, however, was constrained to admit, that he never was present at a more desperate action. "Victory cost a great deal of blood, but we fought with *rebels whom it was necessary to subdue*."*

* It was well observed, by a contemporary writer on this dispatch,—"It is difficult to know whether to laugh, or to shudder with horror, at hearing rebels, covered with the blood of their own Monarch, and boasting of having restored lost liberty, treating as *rebels* a sovereign people, fighting in defence of their laws, their religion, their houses, and their independence, against Parisians, Gascons, and Normans, who came to scale their unexplored mountains, in order to lay waste the country, and to plunder and enslave her inhabitants. Admirable results of a revolution, made *by the people, and for the people*, for the rights of their sovereignty, for the glory of philosophy, and for an example to the universe! A respectable nation that, formed of these countrymen of *Montaigne*, of *Hopital*, of *Sully*, of *Catinat*, of *Fenelon*, and of *Malesherbes*, who, for five-pence a day, sell their lives to five distributors of calamities; who

This dreadful success decided the neighbouring cantons to submit, at least for the present, to the military mandates of a power which they could no longer resist. Schauenbourg entered those of Schwitz and Zug without resistance; and disarmed the inhabitants. If the regicidal rulers of Republican France had committed no other act, of a disgraceful nature, their conduct to the Swiss would alone suffice to stamp their name and character with indelible infamy, and to transmit them to posterity as objects of eternal execration. And here it must be remarked, that the Irish rebels, by carrying on a correspondence with the French Directory, and preserving a friendly intercourse and an alliance with them, at the very time when they were employed in the execution of their infernal project for destroying the freedom and independence of the Swiss; and in murdering the innocent inhabitants of the country, with circumstances of wanton cruelty, disgraceful to humanity, aggravated their own guilt in a very great degree, and proved, beyond a doubt, that *liberty* was a mere watch word with them, and that they only sought to overturn the established constitution, for the purpose of establishing a most odious and sanguinary despotism on its ruins.

While the Directory had, by these measures, obtained possession of Switzerland, for their alliance with the mock government of that Republic rendered them, in fact, masters of the country, and thus afforded them a fresh means of annoying and attacking the House of Austria, the Congress of Rastadt, opened for the purpose of settling the terms of a peace between France and the Empire, continued its sittings.—It was in a manner surrounded with French soldiers, for the Emperor, in strict observance of the treaty of Campo Formio, had withdrawn his troops from Suabia and the Upper Rhine.—Mentz then fell into the hands of the French; and the fort of the Rhine, in front of Manheim, was seized without ceremony. Thus the Directory accomplished their object, by depriving the Empire of the assistance of the Emperor, and by reaping the fruits of the armistice without observing its conditions. By these

annihilate flourishing societies; and who, while waiting for some new empire to desolate, amuse themselves with plunging little innocent democracies into that hell of which they are the Ministers! *Mallet du Pan.*

transactions, all kind of confidence was destroyed, and it could not be expected that the Congress at Rastadt would produce any beneficial result. The French Government had recourse to their usual arts for seducing the Court of Vienna by delusive hopes, or for intimidating it by threats; by exciting dissensions and jealousy between the different Members of the Germanic body, with a view to profit by the confusion; by subverting the Constitution of Germany; and by breaking asunder the thread which held its different parts together. Whenever the French Government sought to allure the Emperor, by holding out to him a prospect of aggrandizement, they took special care to apprize the Court of Berlin of the circumstance, as a proof of the growing ambition of Austria. One day the Emperor was promised an extension of territory on the side of Bavaria; but the next, the Duke of Deux Ponts, heir to the Electorate, was assured of the protection of the Directory, against the projected dismemberment of his inheritance. In order to shew their contempt for crowned heads, the Directory had selected Jean de Bry, the man who, in an early period of the Revolution, had proposed to the National Convention to form a band of 1,200 Regicides, to be employed in the assassination of all the Sovereigns of Europe. Month after month passed away in fruitless negotiation, while, as the Imperial Deputies extended their concessions, the French plenipotentiaries increased their demands.—After it had been agreed to cede to France all the German possessions on the left bank of the Rhine, it was clearly and distinctly understood, that the middle of the Rhine was to form the boundary between the two countries. Having gained this point, the French next insisted on retaining all the islands in the Rhine, and certain positions on the right bank. In short, it was perfectly clear that they would submit to no terms which did not both destroy the integrity of the German Empire, and open to them a free passage, at all times, into Germany.—Throughout the whole of the negotiation the French displayed the most outrageous insolence, and the most despicable duplicity; and it continued, with little variation, during the whole of the year 1798.

It was not the least remarkable circumstance attending this disgraceful scene, that the French, after securing the cession of the whole country, which they claimed for themselves, on the left bank of the Rhine, insisted

on dictating the mode in which the different parties, to whom the ceded territory had belonged, should be indemnified by the plunder of other provinces on the right bank of the Rhine. This conduct was alone sufficient to display the turbulent, and revolutionary, spirit by which the Directory were actuated; for, having gained their object by extending the boundary of their Republic to the Rhine, it could be of no consequence to them, how the injured parties were indemnified, or whether they had any indemnification or not, unless, for the purpose of dismembering the German Empire, by sowing dissensions between its different Princes.—*Justice* was out of the question, for it could not be more unjust to deprive the proprietors of territory on the left bank of the river of their dominions, without any indemnification, than it would be to rob another proprietor of his territory on the right bank, in order to indemnify the first. The means proposed was to *secularise*, as it was called, certain bishopricks of the Empire, and to transfer them to the injured parties. In short, the whole was a system of plunder and injustice, perfectly congenial with the genius of the French Republic, and with the feelings and principles of its rulers and agents, but such as the Emperor, or any other lawful Sovereign, should have perished, ere he should have given it the stamp of his authority.

The deputies of the Empire had a pretty strong proof of the respect which the French Republic paid to the independent States, with which she was at peace, during their diplomatic conferences at Rastadt, in the conduct of the Republican Ambassador at Vienna.—The Directory had selected Bernadotte for this office, probably for his insolence and presumption; and certainly not for his diplomatic skill and knowledge, for he had been raised from the ranks to the command of an army. This will be considered as no unjust imputation on the *virtuous* rulers of the French Republic, when it is remembered, that this man had, in the most open and explicit manner, previously displayed his total disregard of justice, and his utter contempt for the laws of nations. He had arrested Mr. D'Antraigues, a French Emigrant, who had entered into the Russian service, and was attached to the Russian embassy. And when the ambassador represented the injustice of this proceeding, and the insult which it involved to the Sovereign whom he represented, the

brutal republican answered, "This is not a question of law or of justice, but depends on the law of the strongest, and I am the strongest here; M. d'Antrigues is our enemy; if he were the strongest he would put us to death; I am the strongest, and I'll see what I can do." This was a sufficient claim to promotion, with men who had themselves risen by acts of violence and injustice from the lowest to the highest stations.—When sent to Vienna, on the conclusion of the treaty of Campo Formio, he was, as might be expected, completely ignorant of every thing which an ambassador ought to know; and he was totally unable to transact the smallest business, without previous recourse to his Secretaries and Aides-de-Camp. He had also taken with him to Vienna, a number of young republicans, men of weak minds, and dissipated character, vain of the name of Frenchmen, which every honest man now blushed to bear, who, with equal folly and indecency, ridiculed the customs and manners of the Germans; boasted of their own superiority; and vilified every thing which differed from what they had been accustomed to see in their own country. The systematic forbearance of the Austrian cabinet, in passing over insults and insolence, which would have justified an application to the Directory, to recall the licentious troop whom they had sent to his capital, encouraged Bernadotte to believe, that he might proceed much farther in his career of encroachment, and that he might even produce a revolt in the very capital of the empire, and the seat of government; a brilliant exploit, which could not fail to give him a distinguished place in the annals of this revolutionary age. For this purpose, having published his intention of soon leaving Vienna, and having taken such steps as would induce a belief that he meant to carry his intention into effect, he secretly ordered a tri-coloured flag of liberty to be made, with strict injunctions to have it ready by the 13th of April, (1798). On the evening of that day, the people of Vienna were surprized by the sudden display of this symbol of rebellion, four yards in length, in the balcony of the ambassador's residence, and extending from thence into the public street. The people, very naturally, flocked together at this extraordinary sight, in the heart of the capital, and considering it in a just point of view, as an insult offered to their sovereign, and as a signal of revolt, expressed their displeasure with a warmth and a plainness well suited to the occasion. The officers of the police, however, interfered, and

the people would have quietly dispersed, had not some of the ambassador's people stept forward in the balcony, and insulted them by their threats, while the servants below were as insolent as their masters; and Bernadotte himself, forgetting his public character and station, heated with wine, and enraged at the stupidity of the people in censuring what he expected them to applaud, ran to the gate of his residence, with all the fury of a Parisian regicide, leading a mob to the attack of a palace, and grasping, in one hand, his sabre, and clenching the other, uttered the most offensive menaces, and the most vulgar abuse, against them. The rage of the people now rose above controul; but still they went no farther than to insist on the removal of the tri-coloured flag. This, however, was peremptorily refused by Bernadotte, nor could all the intreaties of the director of the police, and the commander of the town guard, who had hastened to his relief, as soon as they were apprized of the tumult, induce him to listen to their earnest entreaties, to comply with this reasonable request. These officers were treated by him with the most brutal insolence, and the most indecent threats. They sent, however, for picquets of cavalry and infantry, which hastened to the spot, and exerted themselves to the utmost to preserve tranquillity. But the streets were soon filled with people, and they were so incensed at the repeated insults and threats of this vulgar representative of the upstarts of the Luxembourg, that they assailed his house with stones, broke the windows, threw down, and destroyed, the flag of Rebellion, burst open the street-door, and demolished his kitchen furniture. The military, however, who had by this time arrived, took possession of the stair-case, and saved the Ambassador from the fury of the people, who were very well disposed to inflict on him such a punishment as the insolent brutality of his conduct most richly deserved. At two in the morning tranquillity was completely restored. The next day, two Noblemen, attached to the Court, were sent to Bernadotte, to enter into an amicable explanation of this unpleasant occurrence. But it neither suited his temper nor his designs, to be satisfied with any explanations which could be given; and he vehemently insisted on receiving his passports without delay.—And, on the 15th of April, this ruffian, who had nearly fallen a victim to his own infamous attempt to raise an insurrection in the Capital of the Sovereign to whom he was accredited as Ambassador, in violation

of the law of nations, and of that respect which is due from one independent power to another, left Vienna, escorted by a large body of horse, and proceeded to Rastadt.

The Revolution in Switzerland was not the only proof which the Emperor received of the hostile spirit of the French Directory, during the *amicable* conferences at Rastadt. The Cisalpine Republic, Buonaparté's favourite child, was not yet modelled to the taste of these revolutionary Cognoscenti, not sufficiently humiliated in spirit, nor sufficiently docile and tractable. A proposed alliance with France, though ultimately adopted, had caused great murmurs, and excited much discontent. It was resolved, therefore, to make a radical reform, both in the Legislative body, and in the Directory. Some decisive step appeared the more necessary to be taken, as the public mind in Italy was considerably agitated, and as execrations of the French, and ardent wishes for the return of the Austrian dominion, were openly and loudly expressed; and as there was also every prospect of a speedy renewal of the war in Germany. As the French Directory had given to these Italians a *perfect and unperishable* Constitution, with one stroke of their pens;—so, with another, they destroyed it, by proving the impossibility of carrying it into execution.—The first Constitution was the work of Buonaparté, who, to save trouble and expence, carried the last new French code to be transcribed at Milan, distributed the different powers as they had been distributed in France, chalked out the Cisalpine territory, divided, sub-divided, and reduced to symmetry, the national representation, filled the chief departments of the State with his creatures, and proclaimed the immortality of this glorious work.

The Directory, and all their train of writers and orators, celebrated this master-piece of wisdom, in their turn, as a wonderful conception of genius, under which the Cisalpine Republic would flourish for ever, would astonish the world by the miracles of her liberty, and would bless the generosity of her founders day and night. They *guaranteed* this Constitution, and that guarantee was even made a special condition of the treaty of alliance.

Such was the language, and such the conduct, of the Directory in 1797; but, in 1798, they changed their views, and impeached the infallibility of their own oracles. The mutinous disposition of the Cisalpine Government, and the resolution now adopted to render that Republic, to all intents and purposes, a province of France, betrayed them into a *majestic* inconsistency. The execution of their new plan was entrusted to one Trouvè, a man who had been engaged to write stupid paragraphs in the *Moniteur*, and, for a short time, was Secretary to the Directory, then returned to his old occupations, whence he was taken to fill a diplomatic situation at Naples, where he refused to comply with a general custom, and to take off his hat, when the King entered the Opera House.* For this purpose Trouvè was sent as Ambassador to Milan; and, while he amused the Government with lies and protestations, he concerted, with General Brune, and another tool of the Directory, one Faypoult, who had formerly been Minister at Genoa, a new Legislative experiment on the Republic. All the constituted authorities of this *yearling* republic, and all the violent revolutionists, were decided enemies to any innovation. But the people themselves, supremely indifferent to these transmutations, viewed, with equal contempt, the advocates of the new system and their opponents, and only felt regret for the loss of their legitimate government.

As soon as the business was arranged, and had received the final sanction of the Luxembourg, Trouvè, and the French General at Milan, opened the scene by throwing four hundred of the most distin-

* Cassandre, ou quelques Reflexions sur la Revolution Française, &c. 1798. This little work, which contains many curious anecdotes, connected with the History of the Times, is the production of General Daniscan, the opponent of Buonaparté, at the attack of the Sections of Paris, in the Autumn of 1795, by the Conventional troops; a man of sense, information, activity, and zeal, who was perfectly acquainted with all the mysteries of the French Revolution, and with all the conduct and characters of its founders and agents.—His *Bandits Demasqués*, and his *Fléau des Tyrans et des Septembriseurs*, exhibit sufficient proofs of the qualities which I have described him to possess, and will supply some useful materials for the historian of the Revolution.

guished enemies of the projected innovation into prison. They threatened with the same fate whoever should dare to disobey them, and signified their will to the two Councils, which were nearly deserted, ordering them to fix their seal to the new regulation of their *social organization*.—"*Receive it*," said this modern Justinian, "*as a pledge of the friendship of the French Republic*." The *Lettre de Cachet*, by which the French Directory notified their will to the Legislative Body, was one continued satire on their first Constitution, and, consequently, on that of France, from which it had been literally copied.—"*It has led you*," said they, *into the most complete and frightful anarchy*. Yet, the year before, this same constitution had been presented and *guaranteed* to them as a masterpiece of wisdom, and a treasure of prosperity.* By the new charter of Cisalpine liberty, the members of the Legislative Body were reduced from two hundred and forty, to one hundred and twenty; but the powers of the Directory were greatly enlarged. To these were assigned the privilege of proposing laws, the absolute disposal of the public treasure, of the army, and even of the guard of the councils; the right of annulling, at their discretion, the liberty of the press; and the appointment of military officers. Mr. Trouvè alledged *economy* as the motive for reducing the rulers of the Legislative Body, though, at the same time, he increased the salaries of the remainder, as well as those of the Directory.

The object of the sages of the Luxembourg, in this pantomime exhibition, was to increase the facility of corrupting and governing the Cisalpine legislature, without encountering those obstacles which arise from the determined spirit of independent representatives; while, by the abridgement of their powers, and the extension of those of the Directory, the whole authority of the state was placed in the hands of five persons, who would be more easy to manage than two hundred and forty.

When the tyrants of the Luxembourg silenced the Cisalpine opposition by committing them to prison; when they dismissed, in an arbitrary

* Mallet du Pan.

manner, one hundred and twenty representatives, and five directors of an *independent* republic; when they compelled the relics of this legislative body to promulgate, without examination or contradiction, the political manifestoes of the journalist, Trouvè, these judges of the new school anathematized the first constitution, as not having received *the sanction of the people!* Never did any set of men display a more sovereign or insulting contempt for their fellow-creatures; never was the abuse of power accompanied by such shameless derision!—The one hundred and forty deputies who remained were selected from the most insignificant and contemptible of the whole body; the Directors were of the same description; the most respectable of the five was one *Lamberti*, who, before the French invasion, had gained a subsistence by keeping a public brothel and gaming house, in which he compelled his own wife to play a principal part.*

Rome was destined to undergo as great a transformation as the Cisalpine republic, and by much the same means. The peace of Tolentino, concluded at the beginning of 1797, by which the French had gained the legations of Ferrara, Bologna, and Romagna, besides a large sum of money,† and a valuable collection of pictures and statues, having proved the facility with which the weak government of Rome might be plundered by the despoilers of Europe, the French Directory resolved to complete its total subversion, with a view to further depredations. To carry this resolution into effect, Cacault, the French resident, was recalled, and a more expert revolutionist, Joseph Buonaparté, sent to supply his place. The first act of this new ambassador was to claim the liberty of all persons who were confined for their *political opinions*, that is, all traitors and seditious persons. These *emancipated patriots* were anxious, of course, to shew their gratitude to their benefactor, and were accordingly constant in their visits to him, to which they were further induced by the circumstance of the security which it afforded; as a certain distance round the abode of a foreign minister was deemed

* Mallet du Pan, Mercure Britannique, tom. i. p. 370.

† 1,750,000*l.*

sacred by the government of Rome, and even exempted from their authority. Soon after, Joseph Buonaparté presided at a public meeting, called the feast of liberty, and convened by some of the most worthless characters in Rome.

The disaffected being prepared, by these preliminary measures, for acts of violence and disorder, began to exhibit some unequivocal symptoms of revolt. They erected poles, in the different parts of the city, on which they stuck caps of liberty, and danced round them at midnight. They sent out false patroles to deceive and confine the regular guard; and, at length, they appointed the 27th of December for carrying into effect the settled plan for the subversion of the papal authority.

Early in the evening of that day, a number of persons began to assemble in the street opposite to the Corsini palace, at which the French ambassador resided. To these men French cockades were given, and a Frenchman was seen to distribute money among them. As the mob increased, loud murmurs of discontent were heard, and public orators descanted on the misery of the people, and the oppressions of the government, in strict imitation of the plan pursued by the French regicides, in the Palais Royal, in the first days of the revolution. One of these orators was an Abbe, who explained to the mob the meaning of various quotations, with which he had adorned his patriotic harangue, the drift of which was to prove, from scripture, that the time was drawing nigh for the overthrow of the existing government. By this time they had acquired sufficient strength to begin their active operations, and they proceeded to take possession of one of the guard houses, and to seize the arms. They next attempted to secure the Ponte Sesto, but here they were opposed by a patrole of horse, who drove them back into the court-yard of the Corsini palace, and into the adjacent street.—The noise and confusion which their flight occasioned, induced Buonaparté and his friends to come out of the palace to learn the cause. They had their swords drawn, and General Duphot called out to the officer commanding the cavalry to come and speak to him; the commo-

tion, however, continuing, the military fired on the mob, and a *chance shot** killed the French General.

Buonaparté, and three French officers who attended him, finding their own acts recoiling on themselves, and fearing, probably, to experience the fate of Duphot, prudently returned to the palace. The tumult was soon quelled by the steady conduct of the military, and not more than ten or twelve lives were lost upon the occasion. Having thus gained the wished-for pretext, and accomplished the principal object of his treacherous mission, Joseph Buonaparté left Rome, with his suite, early the next morning, notwithstanding the earnest, and abject, entreaties of the Papal Secretary of State, who offered him every satisfaction which he could possibly require, for an event which was the effect of an accident, occasioned by his own most infamous machinations. Some weeks previous to this event, the Cisalpine troops had received orders to make an irruption into the territory of the Church, and they even took forcible possession of the fortresses of Saint Leo and Pesero; while they laid waste the adjacent country. The only pretext for this invasion of a friendly state, was, that the Pope had not formally acknowledged the sovereignty of the Cisalpine Republic. Never, before the revolution, was the mere forbearance to acknowledge a new power, which any independent nation has a right either to acknowledge or not, as it please, without assigning any motive for its conduct, alledged as a reason for committing hostilities, in time of peace, and without any previous demand of satisfaction, or any explanation whatever. But that this was a false pretext soon proved manifest, as the Pope, anxious to avoid all disputes, made the acknowledgement in the form prescribed; yet, at the very time of this tumult at Rome, these Cisalpine slaves of France were continuing their ravages in the march of Ancona. The moment, however, Buonaparté left Rome, they received orders to discontinue their hostile operations, and to restore the territory which they had seized.†

* *A brief Account of the Subversion of the Papal Government*, 1798, by Richard Duppa

† Notwithstanding these facts, which cannot be controverted, a French writer, who has compiled what he calls, "Historical and *Philosophical Memoirs* of Pius the Sixth and his ponti-

The first month of the year 1798 was passed in prayers, supplications, and in all those spiritual means with which the Romish Church abounds, for impressing the minds of the people with a due sense of their situation, and for imprecating the divine favour on their cause. Had the enthusiasm thus excited been properly directed to a resolute resistance of the

ficate," &c. has had the astonishing effrontery to assert, that Duphot "fell the victim of his generous devotion, under the *repeated strokes* of the base wretches whose rage he had hoped to appease;"—the truth is, that he was shot by a chance-ball, and of course received no blows. But, even according to the account here given, Duphot deserved the fate he met with; and the Roman soldiers had a right to shoot him, even supposing they had shot him intentionally. For it is stated, that Duphot had rushed forward to protect the seditious insurgents against the troops; in other words, he had joined the insurrection, and opposed the troops who had been employed to quell it. But this historical and philosophical republican does not blush to assert, that the French ambassador had a right to protect a banditti who were committing acts of high treason, and openly rebelling against their lawful sovereign! His words are, "the insurgents having run to take refuge within the jurisdiction of the French ambassador's palace, which ought to have been for them not a place of head-quarters, as they pretended, but an *inviolable asylum*; the armed force, *equally vile as atrocious*, had the audacity to pursue them into its precincts, and to convert that asylum into a theatre of battle. Already the law of nations was most glaringly violated, &c." Vol. II. p. 327, 328. The difference between an inviolable asylum for insurgents, and head-quarters for them, is not very easily understood; as wherever they could collect in safety, free from interruption, and form their plans of attack, would be, to all intents and purposes, their *head-quarters*. But this monstrous pretension, claiming for the French diplomatists—(a set of men chosen expressly for their crimes, and for no other purpose than to insult the princes to whom they were delegated, and to excite their subjects to revolt) a right to afford protection to men in a state of insurrection against their lawful government, and to render the residences of French ambassadors asylums for rebels, on no account to be violated, sufficiently shews the utter contempt in which the French themselves held the law of nations, the determined profligacy with which they violated the rights of Independent States, and braved their Sovereigns in the very seats of their government. To suppose that the extraordinary respect which the papal government paid to foreign ambassadors, and the consequent exemption of the precincts of their residences from the ordinary visits of the police, and from all the common processes of law, should extend to the protection of rebels and traitors, is a supposition that the Pope had adopted a suicidal system of policy, equally irrational and dangerous,—a supposition which could only be engendered in the disordered brain of a French regicide. Nothing could be more clear or rational than the origin and progress of this insurrection, and of the revolution which followed it. The French having determined to produce it, recall an ambassador, whose conduct has been comparatively peaceable and decorous, and, after ordering their minions, the Cisalpine government, to invade the Roman territory, in the hope of having their interposition claimed to repel it, they then send another ambassador, whose first act is to insist on the release

meditated attack by the French, it would have been most fortunate for the country, and the barbarians would have had reason to repent their injustice and rapacity. But, instead of resistance, nothing but the most abject submission, and the most servile solicitations for mercy and forbearance, were in the contemplation of the statesmen of the Vatican. In the instructions sent to the papal ambassador at Paris, the Marquis Massimi, Cardinal Doria, who wrote them, in the Pope's name and his own, deplored an event which, he truly observed, it was not possible for them either to foresee or to prevent. "You are to request of the Directory," said he, "that they will demand whatever satisfaction they think proper. To demand and to obtain it will be the same thing, for neither his Holiness, nor I, nor the Court of Rome, shall ever be easy in our minds, until we are certain that the Directory are satisfied."*

It is scarcely to be conceived, that this conduct only seemed to increase the rage of the French government, and to accelerate the accomplishment of a project long since formed. It is perfectly clear that,

of all persons who had been imprisoned for treason or sedition; public murmurs immediately begin; the French distribute money among the mob; an insurrection ensues; the papal guards, contrary to expectation, endeavour to quell it; the insurgents fly for protection to the French ambassador; and a French General hastens to their assistance, and endeavours to prevent the troops from attacking or apprehending them; all this is perfectly rational and consistent; whereas, the account given by the French, imputing the public commotions to the papal government itself, is not more contrary to fact than repugnant to common sense. The Pope had made every sacrifice to avert the wrath of the French; he had a dread both of their arts and of their arms; and he stooped to the most abject submission in order to procure their forbearance.—Yet is it pretended, that, in opposition both to his known sentiments and to his evident interest, he caused the French ambassador's palace to be attacked by his troops, and did that which, he must very well know, would infallibly produce his own ruin, and the subversion of his government. Unhappily, the degraded state of the press, on the continent of Europe, at this period, afforded the means of circulating the most barefaced, and the most odious, falsehoods, while it rendered their confutation extremely difficult, and frequently impracticable. Fortunately, however, for the cause of truth, documents have survived the wrecks of empires, sufficient to overthrow the monstrous fabric of imposition and fraud, erected by sanguinary tyrants, who aimed not only to subdue the bodies of men, but to enslave their minds.

* *Historical and Philosophical Memoirs of Pius* VI. &c. Vol. II. p. 331.

had the account given by Joseph Buonaparté himself, and by the servile scribes of the Directory, been as strictly true as it was grossly false; had the Directory formed no plan for the subversion of the Papal government, for the subjugation of the Roman people; the unbounded submission here made, the unlimited satisfaction here offered, must have satisfied them. The worthy representative of the Directory, with a baseness of soul, and a malignity of heart, peculiar to his family, spurned the proffered concessions of the Pope, and insulted the government, which he had conspired to destroy. "Crafty and rash," said this miserable upstart, in a letter to his masters from Florence, and, "in compassing criminal deeds, base and grovelling after they have been committed; it now lies prostrated at the feet of the Minister Azara, (the Spanish ambassador at Rome) entreating him to come to me at Florence, and bring me back to Rome." And the stupid biographer of the unhappy Pontiff, after quoting this passage from the letter of Joseph Buonaparté, observes, with unblushing impudence, "a government thus appreciated, could not hope to obtain pardon; and vengeance soon followed the crime which it had, at least, suffered to be perpetrated."

Nothing now remained but to perform the last act of the revolutionary tragedy. General Berthier, the supple tool of every regicide from Barras to Buonaparté, received orders to march to Rome, with an army of French and Cisalpine troops; they reached the neighbourhood of Rome very early in February. The Pope made one other attempt to deprecate the vengeance of the invaders. He sent Prince Belmonte, the Neapolitan Minister, to meet the French army, and to ascertain the intentions of its commander.* Berthier told him, that the only object of the Directory was to apprehend the persons accessary to the death of

* The author of the Memoirs of Pius the VIth. already quoted, ridiculing the religious ceremonies at Rome, and describing the state of the metropolis, after the departure of Joseph Buonaparté, observes—"While the Madonnas shed tears in answer to the vows addressed to them, portraits of General Buonaparté were distributed among the people, with the inscription, "THIS IS THE TRUE LIKENESS OF THE HOLY SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD." Vol. II. p. 336. And this horrible blasphemy is stated, not only without censure, but with implied praise; it is related as an anecdote, classed under the head "*Efforts of Patriotism*," opposed to *the Mummeries of Superstition! ! !*"

Duphot; and that the Pope might rest assured of the utmost security; that the Directory had expressly commanded him to respect the existing government, the Catholic religion, and all public as well as private property, and that he would not even enter the city of Rome. In order to lull the suspicions of the Pope the better, or rather to render the infamous deception more complete, he committed these declarations to writing, and delivered them to the Neapolitan Minister;* demanding, in return, that the Pope should issue an edict to quiet the minds of the people; that no blood might be shed; and that nothing should be removed from the museums, the libraries, or the galleries,—asserting that, if these conditions were not complied with in the most unequivocal manner, he had orders to take possession of Rome, and of the Ecclesiastical State, by force.

These very propositions would have sufficed to open the eyes of any other Prince, and to have dictated the necessity of the most vigorous means of defence to any other Council, than that to which modern Rome was, at this time, subjected. If the punishment of those who had been instrumental to the death of Duphot had, as this impudent valet of the Directory declared, been the only object which the French government had in view, however unjust it was, there could be no necessity to send an *army* to obtain it; as the Pope had expressly offered to make any satisfaction which the Directory might require. But, overlooking this fact of the mission of an army on such an errand, and admitting even the necessity of their presence for the accomplishment of the avowed object, (and if murder were to be committed, and the execution of the men who shot Duphot would have been murder, none were so well qualified for the purpose, as French Officers and French soldiers) what connection could the removal of the treasurers of arts and science, which Rome contained, possibly have to do with the question. In short, Berthier spoke as plain as a thief on the road, who submits to the traveller the alternative of parting with his money or his life;—he clearly acknowledged his object; and distinctly told the papal government, that, if the people should presume to defend their laws, their

* Duppa's Brief Account, &c. p. 32.

liberty, or their property, or to deprive them of any portion of the fruits of their projected plunder, their lives should pay the forfeit of their temerity, and the city be delivered up to all the horrors of pillage, by a French army, exceeding, in atrocity of every kind, the worst effects of the unbridled rage of untutored barbarians. It was, in short, the manifesto of a leader of banditti, calculated less to deceive than to intimidate. The Pope, indeed, seems to have entertained strong suspicions of Berthier's sincerity, for he dispatched some deputies to conclude with him some specific and definite terms of accommodation; but he refused to see them.—The unhappy Pontiff then complied, obeyed the mandate of the military ruffian, and issued the prescribed edict, to forbid his subjects to resist their enemies and his own,

This last act of expiring authority appeared on the very day (Feb. 9th) on which the French, who had advanced by forced marches, fixed their camp on the Monte Maria, before one of the gates of the city. Not seeking to preserve even the appearance of consistency, Berthier, regardless of his recent declaration, the very next day summoned the Castle of St. Angelo to surrender. Having obtained easy possession of this fortress, he set all the convicts at liberty; then secured the gates of the city, and made prisoners of the Pope, the members of the government, and the whole population, without having experienced the slightest resistance.

Berthier immediately issued a proclamation, assuring the people, that their property should be sacred, that their persons should not be molested, and that the functions of the church should be *religiously respected*.*

* Duppa's Brief Account, &c. p. 37. It is worthy of remark, that one of Berthier's first acts "was to suppress the odious prerogative of *the right of asylum*, enjoyed by churches and other privileged places;" (*See Historical and Political Memoirs of Pius VI.* Vol. II. p. 344;) the pretended violation of which right was the alledged motive for the invasion of the country by the French.—But the true cause of this atrocious conduct was very frankly acknowledged by a French officer to the superior of a Dominican Convent.—"We were distressed," said he, "for money, and we were obliged to come: as for the death of Duphot, it would have been of no consequence, if there had not been other objects of greater importance in view."

Duppa's Brief Account, p. 79. *Note.*

There was not, however, one public declaration, made by this man, which was not completely falsified by his conduct; and, indeed, many of his promises seem to have been made for the sole purpose of proving his utter contempt of shame and decency, as displayed in the constant violation of his voluntary engagements.

On the 15th Berthier made his triumphal entry into Rome, not as a brave conqueror, not as the harbinger of peace, but as the herald of destruction. The tree of liberty was, at the same time, planted in the ancient capitol, where the French commander repeated one of those Republican rhapsodies, which had been in use since the Revolution, and which every *patriot* knew by rote. A proclamation was also issued, declaring the Romans free and independent; announcing the destruction of the ancient government, (which Berthier had so recently protested the Directory had commanded him to *respect,*) and the erection of a *Roman Republic* on its ruins, founded on the *sovereignty of the people,* and "*under the special protection of the French army.*" To render this act more grating to the Pope, and to add insult to injury, the despicable coward, by whose command it was performed, caused the ceremony to take place on the anniversary of his election to the sovereignty.

To perfect the infamy of this revolutionary exhibition, in the very act of violating the laws both of God and of man, the Republican general dictated the following invitation, issued by the *sovereign people* to their fellow citizens.—"The foundation of political liberty rests on the exact observance of religion and the law, on which, in a peculiar manner, depends the protection of a free people. In evidence of which truth, the sovereign people make it known, that to-morrow (Quinquagesima Sunday) will be sung a solemn mass at the altar of the tribune of the august temple of the Vatican, with the joyful voice of the *Te Deum*; therefore, the devout and free Roman people are invited to attend, and thank, with sounds of joy, the Most High, who is the supreme author of religion and of liberty."* This impious mockery

* This invitation was drawn up in the true form of the Robespierrean models; it was dated on the 17th of February, "*in the first year of the Roman Republic, one and indivisible.*" And

of devotion, in which the deposed Cardinals were compelled to take a part, formed part of a plan for rendering Religion the handmaid to Injustice. With the same view, Priests were employed in the churches and squares, to prove to the people that religion and democracy were inseparably connected; and, lest the force of their arguments should not be felt, their incredulous audience were reminded that they were Christians, and that the implicit obedience yielded by the founder of their faith, to the higher powers, sufficiently marked the path which it was the duty of his followers to pursue; and, therefore, it was not only incumbent on them, as disciples of reason, but it was a religious obligation to submit to whatever form of government it had pleased *Providence* to set over them.* It escaped the notice of these accomodating sophists, that, even allowing the justice of their abstract argument, its applicability to the existing state of things in Rome might safely be denied.—For, instead of admitting that Providence had produced the revolution, it might, with much greater truth, be ascribed to the agents of the great enemy of the human race.

The Pope still remained at Rome, although every insult which the ingenuity of Republican malice could devise was practised to provoke him to fly. Finding he would not go of his own accord, the French resolved to remove him; and, accordingly, he left the city on the morning of the 20th of February, under an escort of French cavalry, and in five days arrived at Siena. Thence he was removed, in the month of May, to a Carthusian convent in the neighbourhood of Florence. On the 27th of March, 1799, he was transferred to Parma; and was afterwards removed to France, where he finished his earthly career, the weak victim of unmerited persecution.

After his departure from Rome, his Palace of the Vatican was

at the head of it, in large letters, appeared these words of ominous import,—LIBERTY—EQUALITY.

* *Duppa's Brief Account, p.* 49.

completely plundered of its furniture and effects. Indeed, the illustration of Berthier's system of *respect for property* immediately began; a systematic pillage followed, in which no article of luxury, no object of convenience, not even kitchen furniture, escaped the vigilant rapacity of the French Commissaries appointed to superintend this work of destruction. The whole of the nobility and gentry were robbed of all which they possessed, moveable and immoveable; and what added to the misery of the scene, as to the iniquity of the proceeding, was, that the rich were plundered without relieving the poor. The whole mass of plunder, the immense fruits of rapine, went to enrich a set of French cormorants, and were transmitted to a foreign country; churches, palaces, and houses, were rifled; pictures, statues, public monuments, and private collections, the noblest works of art, and the fairest productions of genius, all became a prey to these insatiate invaders, who were accompanied by a set of travelling brokers of their own country, prepared to purchase what the military or civil agents of their government chose to steal.* The extreme oppression exercised over the inhabitants in general, and the distresses of the poor, arising from the poverty of the rich, who had been thus stripped of every thing which they possessed, and who could, consequently, no longer afford to employ them, occasioned some partial commotions, as well at Rome, as at Velletri, Castello, and Albano, which were soon suppressed, and only supplied a pretext for additional acts of cruelty and oppression.

Upon the establishment of the Republic, seven Consuls were appointed to preside over it; and, as these were men chiefly raised from the lower part of the middle class of society, with little education, and violent passions, it is not surprising that they should prove very unfit for the exercise

* These brokers were opulent individuals in France, chiefly from Lyons and Marseilles, who, joining together, formed a considerable capital towards the support of the army of Italy, when Buonaparté first crossed the Alps; with the express condition, that they should have the refuse of the spoils of any conquests that might be made, at a certain per centage, for their own profit, upon a fair valuation, which valuation was also understood to be made by themselves.

Duppa's Brief Account, p. 59. *Note.*

of supreme power,—or that they should fall into perpetual contradictions and absurdities, which rendered them objects of ridicule and contempt. While they preached humility to their fellow-citizens, they displayed the greatest pomp and pageantry themselves, in every respect. They were, however, mere instruments in the hands of the French, for enabling them to carry on their plunder and extortion with greater effect. When the Generals and Commissaries had glutted themselves with wealth, quarrelled about the division of the spoil, mutinied, and dispersed, they were succeeded by others, who exercised the same means of acquiring riches. Thus the system of rapine went on, until nothing more was to be obtained, and artifice had exhausted every resource. The mask was then thrown aside, liberty was declared to be dangerous to the safety of the Republic, the constituted authorities to be incapable of managing the affairs of the State, and military law to be the only rational expedient for supplying their place. Thus, at once, the mockery of consular dignity was put an end to, the Senators (for a Senate had been appointed as well as Consuls) were sent home to take care of their families, and the tribunes were restored to their former occupations. The first operation which followed this change of system was the seizure of the whole annual revenue of every estate productive of more than ten thousand crowns; two-thirds of every estate that produced more than five thousand and less than ten; and one-half of every annual income of less amount.

In short, the blessed fruits of French domination cannot be better described than they have been by the panegyrist of their exploits, the biographer of the unfortunate Pius. He informs us that the two provinces of Bologna and Ferrara were seized by the French, to reimburse them the expences of their expedition. Enormous taxes were imposed on the principal Roman families, which, by producing a material diminution of their expences, obliged them to dismiss their servants, and to leave them wholly without a provision,—caused articles of merchandise to remain unsold, and deprived workmen of their employment. Agriculture and industry were palsied. The French army, when it arrived at Tolentino, at first exacted a contribution of thirty-five millions; to which were added further requisitions of property, the produce of repeated pillage, the spoils of churches, the taxes imposed on

the principal houses, &c. "And we do not in the least exaggerate," says this writer, "in asserting that there have been drawn from this country, so poor in appearance, nearly two hundred millions!"

Soon after the French had obtained possession of Rome, they established a Jacobin Club, in the palace of the Duke d'Altemp, on the model of the original, or mother society, for the purpose of instilling Jacobinical principles into the minds of the Roman youths, after eradicating every sentiment of religion and virtue from thence, and, from their hearts, every good and natural feeling. So rapid was the progress which these young men made, under such tuition, in the path of vice, that one of the members seriously recommended to his fellow-citizens, as a means of establishing the Republic upon a sure and permanent basis, to follow the precedent set by Carrier on the Loire, of sending away all the priests in vessels down the Tiber, and sinking them; and of putting to death all men, without discrimination, above sixty years of age, alledging, as a reason, that such men were known to be too strongly wedded to their prejudices to embrace a new mode of thinking; and hence they became not only useless consumers of provisions, of which there was not a sufficient supply for good and active citizens, but were, at best, tacit enemies of the revolution; and, that the latent and unavoidable influence of the ecclesiastics, in the education of the rising generation, would be obviously prejudical to the growth of patriotic virtue and republican principles.

This atrocious proposal was, however, rejected and censured. But the expediency of getting rid of the priests was soon after taken into consideration by the French. An edict was, accordingly, issued for sending away all the foreign clergy, as well secular as regular, and to make the natives, who were suffered to remain, so far responsible for the peaceable conduct of the neighbourhood in which they lived, that, if any riot should take place, the priests in the district were to be immediately arrested, and tried for their lives, as the supposed authors of the insurrection.*

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that, while the Irish rebels, many of whose priests were most active in the support of their cause, were soliciting the aid of French generals, and

It has been truly observed, that resistance of oppression is a virtue with the seditious insurgents whom France arms against the laws of their country; but it becomes a crime when Frenchmen are its objects. Subjects who, from time immemorial, have obeyed a lawful government, have a right to revolt; but *republicans*, who have been regenerated by the revolutionary sabre, are conspirators and rebels, when they defend their customs, their religion, their wives, their conscience, and their property, against the soldiers of the French government. These maxims are extracted from the republican catechism of the French Directory, and from all the public writings in France, from 1789 to the present time.*

The rage for insurrection and change, which infected the Councils of the Luxembourg at this period, was such that they seemed determined to leave no government untouched, and to convince the whole world of the instability of those constitutions which they had proclaimed to be permanent, and of their inadequacy to answer the

while they were charging the government with oppression for taking the only effectual means for the suppression of treasonable practices, and the punishment of traitors, a French commander promulgated the following law, to restrain the efforts of loyal priests, employed in defending the lawful government of their country, to which they owed allegiance, against domestic and foreign enemies.—" When in a commune there shall be any insurrection or armed mob, all the priests in that commune shall be arrested.

" Any priest who shall be accused of having excited disturbance or insurrection, or of having taken part in any such, shall be brought before the Council of War, and, if convicted, shall be condemned to death.

" The aforesaid priests, although they may not be convicted of having excited insurrection or riot, yet, if they cannot prove that they have exerted themselves to prevent such disturbance, by persuasion or instruction, they shall be retained in prison as hostages, at the discretion of the Commander in Chief.

" If, on the other hand, they can prove that they have exerted themselves with zeal, to prevent such tumult or insurrection, they shall be instantly set at liberty, and restored to their functions.

" General of Division,
" Jouvion St. Cyr."

* Mallet du Pan.

acknowledged purposes of their establishment. Having *re-revolutionized* Switzerland and Rome, and *re-revolutionized* the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics, they now thought proper to try the same experiment upon the Batavian Republic. The chiefs of this *independent* State had changed the form of their government for one more conformable to that of France; had created five directors and a legislative body. But the French rulers, on the representation of the Dutch general, Daendels, overturned the new establishment, dismissed the Directors, reproved the legislature, and gave the people clearly to understand, that they must not attempt to legislate for themselves, but must be exclusively guided by the directions of the French government.

Having thus surrounded France with small Republics, created by her hand, subject to her will, and dependent on her power; having seized the citadel of Turin, and reduced the King of Sardinia to the state of a prisoner in his own capital; and, having secured an easy road into Germany, by the conquest of Switzerland, the Directory turned their attention to the humiliation of England, the never-failing topic of their declamations, and the constant object of their thoughts. They were too wise, however, to carry their threat of invading England into execution; but resolved to appropriate the money which they had extorted, by way of loan, under that pretext, and the troops which they had collected, on their coasts, for that purpose, to a more distant expedition. They announced this project as one which would fill all Europe with astonishment, and it was boastingly announced as being calculated to inflict a more severe blow upon Great Britain, than could be inflicted by an actual descent on her shores. Such was the light in which the French Directory chose to consider, or, at least, to represent the memorable expedition to Egypt, which sailed from Toulon on the 20th of May, 1798. The fleet consisted of thirteen ships of the line, seven frigates, and several armed ships, making a total of forty-four sail, having under their convoy nearly two hundred transports, with upwards of thirty thousand troops aboard,* a number of horses, a large train of artillery, and some hundreds

* In the Annual Register for 1798, (p. 133) the number of French troops destined for Egypt is stated at "about twenty thousand." But it appears, from the correct account given

of sçavans and artisans, of various descriptions. The way in which it was proposed to injure the English, by this expedition to Egypt, was to penetrate through that country, by the Red Sea, to the British territories in the East. In order to effect this purpose, Egypt was to be colonized, and a permanent settlement established there. This notable project had often been in contemplation of the French cabinet, but it was found to be attended with so many and such formidable difficulties, that, with every wish to humble their rivals, none of the French ministers had been found rash enough to undertake it. The papers relating to it were, however, preserved among the state documents of the monarchy, and had, with every thing else, fallen into the hands of the Republicans, when they seized the reins of government.

In order to secure a communication at all times with Egypt, and to have a place of retreat for their ships, if compelled to retreat, without being driven to the necessity of returning to their own ports, it was deemed of consequence to secure the island of Malta. It is true, the Maltese government was at peace with France; but so were the Swiss when they were attacked and subdued; such a consideration never weighed a straw with the Directory in the arrangement of their military plans, and their political projects. Malta was necessary for their purpose, and they were resolved to have it. They therefore set their usual instruments to work, and succeeded in seducing several of the French Knights from their duty, and had, long since, by bribes and promises, secured such assistance as rendered their possession of this important island a matter of certainty. With these prospects before them, the French sailed from Toulon and arrived before the port of Malta, in the month of June. They begged permission to enter the harbour in order to procure water; and on receiving permission only for two ships at a time to enter, they had recourse to the miserable pretext of considering this as a refusal, which justified an attack on the place.—In short, in eight and forty hours,

by Sir Robert Wilson, from official documents, that the whole of the French army in Egypt amounted to 32,180 men.—*History of the British Expedition to Egypt*, &c. by Sir R. Wilson, p. 225. The false statement in the Annual Register has been literally repeated by Dr. Bisset, in his history of the present reign. Vol. VI. p. 218.

Malta, which, provided with the most ample means of defence, both by nature and art, could have stood a siege of many months, surrendered almost without firing a gun, and, after it had been possessed by the Knights for more than two centuries and a half, the French became complete masters of the island.

The first use which Buonaparté made of this important conquest, was to pillage the church, and to seize for himself all the valuable moveables which he could find; he then abolished the order; established a municipality, and a revolutionary provisional government; and, lastly, he pressed all the sailors he could find, and all the regular troops, and sent them on board his fleet. So well were all the measures taken for the success of this work of perfidy and fraud, that some of the French Officers, speaking confidentially to certain Knights of Malta, said,—"We knew better than you did yourselves the extent of your means; we knew that you could not defend yourselves. It has happened at Malta, as it did in Switzerland, where we were; and perhaps you are not aware, that all *the conspirators had taken an oath to massacre you all, the moment the first bomb should be fired.*" * Having left an adequate garrison, under General Vaubois, to defend the island, Buonaparté sailed again on the 20th of June, and reached the Egyptian coast, the place of his destination, on the first of July.

The British government had watched with jealousy the military preparations on the French coast, and no sooner had the fleet sailed from Toulon, than a British squadron was prepared to pursue it. This squadron was intrusted to the command of Sir Horatio Nelson, now a rear-admiral, and was composed of thirteen sail of the line, and a fifty-gun ship, all commanded by officers of known skill, and approved courage. In short, a squadron better equipped, in all respects, was never sent in pursuit of an enemy.

* Many interesting particulars of this treacherous scene will be found in a Letter from Leghorn, dated August 15, 1798, inserted in the *Mercure Britannique*, of Mr. Mallet du Pan, Vol. I. p. 385.

The English government, however, being uncertain of the destination of the French, the Admiral knew not how to shape his course with the greatest probability of overtaking them. He first sailed to Naples, and then to Sicily, and having there received information that the enemy had been seen at Malta, he hastened to that island in quest of them. Here he found that they had sailed some days before, but still he knew not whither; imagining, however, that Egypt was their object, he directed his course to Alexandria, but learnt that they had not been seen there. Mortified at his disappointment, and tired of conjecture, Nelson now sailed to Rhodes, where his inquiries were equally fruitless; passing by Candia, he again reached the Sicilian coast, and entered the bay of Syracuse, where he took in a fresh supply of wood and water. At length the officer sent in search of intelligence, learned from a Turkish governor at Coran, that the French had been seen from Candia, a month before, steering towards Alexandria. To Egypt, accordingly, the British Admiral led his fleet; and, on his arrival off the coast, he saw the harbour of Alexandria crowded with masts, and the French ships of war lying at anchor at a short distance from the shore, in a regular line eastward from the point of Aboukir. They were protected by batteries erected for the purpose on the neighbouring shore, and on an island in their van; and by numerous gun-boats; and, besides, between them and the land were a number of shoals, which, in their apprehension, effectually secured them from attack on that side.

Nelson, however, who had a mind so particularly fertile in resources, that, in whatever situation an enemy presented himself, it instantaneously supplied him with an appropriate and adequate means of attack,—finding the French ships moored in the manner stated, resolved to run in between them and the shore, notwithstanding the batteries and the shoals, and to begin the attack on that side on which, not expecting an attack, they were the least prepared for resistance. This plan was, of course, hazardous; and, in the attempt to carry it into execution, the Culloden, a seventy-four, struck on a shoal, to the great mortification of her gallant commander and crew, by which misfortune there remained but twelve sail of the line, and a fifty gun ship, to oppose to the thirteen sail of the enemy's line, which had, besides, a considerable advantage in

tremendous. The impression which such a victory could not fail to make on their minds must have been most favourable to the English, and must have had a material influence on the subsequent operations in Egypt.

In the mean time, Buonaparté having, most fortunately for himself, reached Alexandria in safety, effected a landing, and might have taken possession of the town without difficulty, or even resistance. But his object was to strike terror into the inhabitants, and he ever preferred slaughter to mercy; conquests dearly bought, to victories gained without bloodshed.—He, accordingly, ordered the place to be stormed, and compelled the inhabitants to fight in spite of themselves. He lost about three hundred men in the attempt, and, in revenge, suffered the town to be pillaged by his troops, who, for several hours, committed every species of cruelty and outrage upon the unoffending natives.

Before he landed, Buonaparté addressed two proclamations to the Pacha of Egypt, and the Commander of the Caravans, informing them that his only object in coming thither was to punish the Beys, and the Mamelukes, who had cheated and oppressed the French merchants. He published also a curious appeal to the people of Egypt, whom he attempted to allure by promising them all the blessed fruits of French Liberty and Equality. He came, forsooth, good man, "to rescue the rights of the poor from the hands of their tyrants;" and the French, devout people! "respected, more than the Mamelukes, God, *his Prophet*, and the *Koran*." Fearful, however, that the simple inhabitants of Egypt might either be unacquainted with his exploits, or disinclined to credit his assertions, he deemed it expedient to inform them, that the French had destroyed the Pope, who judged it necessary to make war against the Mussulmans; and the Knights of Malta, because these foolish men thought that God wished war to be carried on against the Mussulmans; that they had been, at all times, the friends of the Grand Seignior, (whose wishes, he prayed God, he might accomplish!) and the foes of his foes. For these cogent reasons he called upon them to receive the French with open arms, and threatened to put every man to the sword who should dare to oppose them, and to reduce

every village to ashes, the inhabitants of which should presume to defend themselves against the invaders of their territory.

Having provided for the security of Alexandria, in his absence, Buonaparté marched, on the seventh of July, towards Cairo. Murad Bey, at the head of his Mamelukes, harassed his army greatly on their march, and, though he could make no serious impression on it, killed numbers of the men. The Beys then retired towards Cairo, and, in the plain, on which stands the celebrated pyramids, resolved to dispute, with the French, the possession of that city. The action was fought on the twenty-first of July; but the desperate bravery of the Mamelukes could not prevail against the disciplined courage and experience of European troops. The French were victorious, Murad Bey retired to Upper Egypt, and Cairo fell into the hands of the French, who immediately established a Municipality, and every other appendage of a revolutionary government.—They thus became, with little opposition, masters of Lower Egypt; but, at the same time, their fleet was dstroyed, their transports were blocked up in the harbour of Alexandria, and their communication with Europe was entirely cut off.

The efforts of the British Ministers, at this period, were not confined to one particular object, but extended to every quarter, which presented a fair prospect of annoying the enemy. In the Spring of 1798, an expedition was fitted out, under the command of Sir Eyre Coote and Captain Popham, to blow up the sluices and gates on the Bruges Canal, near Ostend, for the purpose of destroying the internal navigation between Holland, Flanders, and France. This service was effectually performed, and with scarcely any loss. But, unfortunately, as the troops were preparing to embark, the wind became so strong, and the sea ran so high, that it was found impossible to reach the ships. In a short time, a large body of French troops approached, and surrounding the English, reduced them, after a most able and gallant defence, to the necessity of surrendering by capitulation.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Effects of the Victory of the Nile—Confidence in the Minister increased—Lenient measures of Lord Cornwallis, the new Viceroy of Ireland, carried to excess—Peace of the Country still disturbed by the Rebels—Address to the Viceroy, complimenting him at the expence of his Predecessor—Prudent conduct of Lord Cornwallis on the occasion—His speech on the prorogation of Parliament in 1798—Justly characterizes the late Rebellion—Praises the vigorous policy of Lord Camden—Ascribes the fury of the Rebels to religious motives—Continental affairs—Spirited Manifesto of the Porte—Acknowledges the vast importance of the victory in the Mediterranean—Unfolds the spirit of French policy with equal force, ability, and truth—The Turks make active preparations for war—Favourable disposition of the Northern powers—Foreign policy of Mr. Pitt at this conjuncture—Endeavours to form a new Confederacy against France—Treaty concluded with the Emperor of Russia—French affairs—Continuance of the Reign of Terror—Severity of Military Conscriptions—False account of the Battle of the Nile in a French official paper—The Directory disclaim all knowledge of the Expedition to Egypt—Their perfidy and duplicity exposed in their communications with the Porte—Contradiction between their declarations and those of Ruffin, their Ambassador at Constantinople—Ruffin produces a Letter, avowing the object of the Expedition to Egypt to be the punishment of the Beys for injuries committed on Frenchmen—Talleyrand denies this to the Turkish Ambassador, at Paris, and declares the conquest of Malta to be the sole object of the Expedition—Falsehoods contained in the French Manifesto proved by the intercepted letters from the French army in Egypt—The Military Conscription extended to the conquered countries—Partial insurrections in the Netherlands—Insolence of Garat, the French Envoy at Naples—Demands the release of all Traitors, imprisoned for their crimes—The King of Naples prepares for war—Enters the Roman Territory—Is defeated at Porto Fornio—Concludes an armistice with the French—Leaves his Capital, and retires to Sicily—Popular tumults excited by the French at Naples—A Revolution effected on French principles—The Neapolitan Republic proclaimed—Meeting of Parliament—The King's Speech—Thanks voted to Nelson and his followers—The Admiral is created BARON NELSON OF THE NILE—Committee of Supply—Mr. Pitt details the expences of the coming year, and the means of providing for them—Flourishing state of Commerce—Large increase of Exports and Imports—Mr. Pitt adverts to the frauds which had been practised to defeat the project of the Triple Assessment—Proposes a new scheme of Finance—The Tax upon Income—Measures proposed for rendering it effective—Powers of Commissioners under the Act—Reflections on the multiplication of Oaths occasioned by the Revenue Laws—Estimated amount of the Tax, ten millions—Grounds

of that Estimate—Advantages of raising a large portion of the Supplies within the year—The energy of the Parliament the cause of National prosperity—Mr. Pitt confutes the notion that a Commercial people cannot be a Warlike people—Pronounces an eulogy on the British Constitution—Mr. Tierney opposes the Tax—Resolutions proposed by Mr. Pitt carried without a division—Remarks on the unequal operation of the Tax upon Income—Farther debates on the subject—The Bill opposed by Sir John Sinclair, Sir Francis Baring, and Mr. William Smith—The fallacy of Sir John Sinclair's arguments exposed—Mr. Pitt justifies the Tax—Comments on the inconsistency of Mr. Smith in admitting the justice of the principle, and opposing every measure for carrying it into effect—Corrects his mistatements on the distinctions of society—Reprobates all new-fangled notions respecting *Equality*—Proves Mr. Smith's arguments to extend to an equal distribution of property—Defends the Bill from the imputation of establishing a *Tithe*—Explains the difference between *Tithe* and the contribution of a Tenth part of Income to be levied by the Act—Argument examined relative to the different effects of the Tax on permanent and on temporary estates—The Bill passes the Commons—Is opposed in the Lords by the Duke of Bedford, and Lords Suffolk and Holland—Manly conduct of Lord Grenville—Mistaken position of Lord Holland—Assertion of the Duke of Bedford respecting Tithes contradicted by the Chancellor—Bill passed into a law—Farther Supplies—New Taxes—Subsidy to Russia—Opposed by Mr. Tierney—Mr. Pitt repels the conclusions drawn by Mr. Tierney regarding the object of the war, and the intentions of the Cabinet—Reflections on the evil tendency of the writings of the French Economists and Philosophists—The inconsistency of Mr. Tierney's arguments detected, and the confusion of his ideas exposed, by Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt draws a just character of the French Republic—Seditious Societies—Papers respecting them referred to a Secret Committee—Report of that Committee—It unfolds a complicated scene of sedition and treason—Plan, and object, of the Societies, to establish a Democratic Republic in Great Britain with the assistance of France—Their Address to the French Directory—The London Corresponding Society abandon the project of annual Parliaments, and universal suffrage, for still more Revolutionary schemes—United Irishmen form Societies in England—Administer unlawful Oaths—Many of them enter the Naval service—Plans for murdering their officers, and for carrying their ships into an enemy's port—Swear to murder the Protestants—Plan for exciting an insurrection in London—and for seizing, at the same moment, the two Houses of Parliament, the Tower, and the Bank—Mr. Pitt introduces two Bills, one for renewing the Bill to enable the King to detain persons suspected of Treason, and another for the suppression of Seditious Societies—Proposes to empower the King to imprison such persons in any one of his gaols—Members of Secret Societies rendered liable to fine, imprisonment, or transportation, according to the nature of their offence—Proprietors of houses at which such Societies are held subjected to a fine—All lectures and discussions at which money is taken for admission prohibited—Printers compelled to affix their names to hand-bills—All presses to be registered—These Bills passed into Laws.

[1798-1799.] The victory of the Nile, and the success which had generally attended his Majesty's arms, as well in the annoyance of his

enemies abroad, as in the suppression of a most dangerous rebellion at home, had, while they raised our reputation, and increased our influence with the cabinets on the Continent, induced the nation to repose great confidence in the Minister. After the rebels of Ireland had been subdued, the system of lenity which the Viceroy had been led to believe would effectually restore permanent tranquillity to that distracted country, was not only adopted with zeal, but carried to such an excess, that rebel-chiefs were seen strutting about the streets of the capital, and insulting those loyal subjects whose blood had been shed in resisting their treasonable attempts, or who had lost their nearest relatives, and dearest friends, in the sanguinary conflict. Notwithstanding, however, the display of this spirit of conciliation, the peace of the country, and the security of its inhabitants, were still subject to frequent interruptions from the depredations of rebels, who, more formidable for their audacity than their numbers, contrived to elude the active vigilance of the troops. Meanwhile the members of that party, which had uniformly opposed every attempt to suppress the rebellion, or to punish the rebels, encouraged, no doubt, by the liberal indulgence of the government, procured an address to be presented to the Viceroy, by one of the companies of Dublin, in which his Excellency was complimented, at the expence of his predecessor. By bestowing commendations on those lenient measures which Lord Cornwallis had deemed it expedient to pursue, it was evidently meant to condemn the vigorous policy of Lord Camden. But the insidious attempt failed to produce the desired effect, for the Viceroy, in his answer, with equal truth and judgment, ascribed his ability to adopt those measures, which were now so loudly praised, to the firm and resolute proceedings to which recourse had been previously had for bringing the rebellion to a speedy termination. The same judgment was displayed by the Lord-Lieutenant, in his speech on the prorogation of Parliament, on the sixth of October, when, adverting to the late situation of the kingdom, he observed, " The foulest and darkest conspiracy was formed, and long carried on by the implacable enemy of these realms, *for the total extinction of the constitution, and for the separation of his Majesty's kingdom of Ireland from Great Britain.* By the unremitting vigilance of my predecessor in this government, the treason had been detected; the apprehension of the principal con-

spirators, and *the salutary measures wisely adopted*, checked its progress; and, through your sagacious diligence, it has been developed in all its parts, and traced to all its sources. A dangerous and wicked rebellion, the consequence of that conspiracy, has been, in a great measure, subdued.

" Religion, that greatest comfort and support of mankind, has been most wickedly perverted to the purpose of influencing the worst of passions; and the vilest arts have been used to persuade the ignorant and unwary, that, in a *reign which has been marked by a series of indulgences to all sects of Christians*, it is the intention of his Majesty's government to oppress, and even to extirpate, that description of his Majesty's subjects, who have received repeated and recent marks of its favour and protection."

This direct and positive approbation of the system pursued by Lord Camden, and which was so strongly reprobated, at the time, by all the leading members of Opposition, in both countries, coming from a nobleman who was universally praised by the Romanists for his conduct, and who certainly was never accused of supporting any system of unnecessary vigour, ought to carry with it particular weight. The Viceroy also paid a tribute of justice to the regulars, militia, fencibles, and yeomanry of Ireland, which amply confuted all the vile calumnies with which their characters had long been assailed by the leaders, the agents, and the emissaries, of faction.

But though Lord Cornwallis extended the spirit of concession, in some instances, farther than even prudence or policy could justify, yet, the peculiar circumstances of the times, and, more especially, the grand object of his mission, sanctioned a line of conduct, which, at any other period, would have been not only unjustifiable, but productive of the worst effects. Before, however, a particular account of the subject here alluded to is given, it will be necessary briefly to state the effect which the grand victory, recently gained in the Mediterranean, had on the spirits and the proceedings of the different powers of the continent.

The Grand Seignior, who was more immediately affected by it, as it gave a fatal blow to those perfidious allies of his, who, under treacherous professions of friendship, had invaded his territory in time of peace, and had pursued a conduct which evinced the most inveterate spirit of enmity, was the first to express his grateful acknowledgements for the benefits which he, individually, must receive from it. In a spirited manifesto, which he published soon after the event, he declared this victory to have been of essential service to his empire, and to be deserving of public acknowledgement. In the paper in question, he displayed a justness of conception, a soundness of judgment, and a fund of good sense, which had very seldom been manifested by any of the European powers. He formed a just estimate of the conduct of the French, and exposed their hypocrisy, ambition, and perfidy, in the clearest and strongest point of view. In one short sentence the policy of the Directory was ably characterized—"*Blinded by pride and vanity, they have forgotten every thing which is called principle, and not a word which they utter is entitled to belief. Their arbitrary measures of violence have no other object than to loosen the bands of union in all nations; for which purpose they have recourse both to secret arts, and to open fire and sword. They mean to erect, in all parts, weak republics, which France can rule, and thus to enslave the world.*" * Hence it clearly appears, that the Ministers of the Porte had acquired a more accurate knowledge of the tyrants of the Luxembourg, than had been obtained by many of the experienced statesmen, who guided the reins of empire on the Continent. But the Turks did not confine themselves to strong expressions, they displayed a resolution to call all their resources into action, and to direct them against the common enemy.

The King of Naples, threatened with destruction by the dangerous approximation of the French armies to his dominions, since the seizure of Rome, was encouraged, by the success of the British arms, to prepare for a spirited, and vigorous, resistance.

* This masterly State Paper was dated the eleventh September, 1798, and was communicated to the British Minister at the Porte.

The most favourable disposition was, also, manifested both by Austria and Russia, to resist any farther encroachments of the French Republic, and to unite, for the purpose of affording effectual protection to the rest of Europe. The foreign policy observed by Mr. Pitt, at this critical period, had, for its object, to fix the wavering, to confirm the steady, and to cement the common bond, which he had the most sanguine hopes of being able to form, by every honourable means in his power. He had established a confidential communication with the cabinet of St. Petersburgh; and the Emperor Paul, whose chivalrous disposition readily embraced any grand and extraordinary project, had agreed to send a formidable force to act against the French; and an army of twenty-three thousand men had actually begun its march to join the Emperor of Germany, as auxiliaries. Five and forty thousand men were destined to assist the Prussian monarch, in case he should be induced, by the joint solicitations of the British and Russian cabinets, to join the new confederacy against the common enemy of Europe. Austria, emboldened by a promise of support from this country, and convinced that nothing but disgrace was to be reaped from the tedious and abhortive negotiations at Rastadt, only consented to prolong the farce, until she should be fully prepared for the renewal of hostile operations. Thus the spirit of the British Minister, wisely directing the extensive resources of his country, and ably seconded by the matchless skill and invincible prowess of her naval commanders, infused fresh vigour into the councils of the continental powers, and prepared them for farther attempts to vindicate their violated rights, and to defend their threatened independence.

In the mean time, the French Directory, elated with the success of their arms on the European continent, sought to diminish the effect of the destruction of their fleet at Aboukir, * by magnifying their conquests

* In one of the official papers of the Directory, *le Directeur*, of the twenty-fifth of September, appeared the following article on the victory of the Nile, which forms an admirable contrast, in all its parts, with the manifesto of the Porte, before cited. "The valour of the English, which so many poor creatures delight to celebrate, consists in nothing more than overpowering their enemies by *superiority of numbers*. Nelson, reinforced by every traitor, after adding to his own squadron squadrons still more numerous, attacked the French on board their ships lying at anchor in an open road. The Britons, emboldened by a STUPID supe-

in Egypt, and by holding out the most magnificent projects of aggrandizement and advantage to the deluded people. Always bent on putting an end to the congress at Rastadt, as soon as it should suit their convenience; and having completed the revolutions of Rome and Switzerland; they made every effort to strengthen their armies, in order to strike a decisive blow in Germany. They had recourse, for this purpose, to all the tyrannical measures which had been introduced by the founders of the republic; young men were forcibly wrested from their distressed families, and sent in chains to the frontiers. Two hundred thousand of these victims of anarchy were decreed to be added to the force already established.

The exposure of the conduct of the Directory to the Turkish government, in the manifesto already noticed, gave great uneasiness to these republican tyrants. The Turks, there, truly asserted, that the neutrality of the Porte, during the war, had been highly advantageous

riority, could not fail to be successful. But the vanquished fought like the three hundred Spartans, and Nelson was little more than Xerxes overwhelming a handful of soldiers by the weight of his army. In point of glory and renown—on which side was the hero? To burn ships is a puny trick, which bespeaks weakness. It is but a hypocritical victory. Compare such ridiculous victories with the formidable bravery of those fifteen hundred brave men, who lately gained so many palms and laurels. See Ireland ranged, in the day of battle, on the side of the republic, for the purpose of opening to our battalions all the roads to London, and of hurling punishment on the Bey of Albion, over the dead bodies of his shop and counting-house warriors." In the same paper, a few days after, the following questions were asked, with a view to shew that no bad consequences could result to the French, from the destruction of their fleet. "Can the victory of Nelson prevent, or even retard, the happy consequences of the expedition, committed to the unfortunate Brueys? If it was the object of that expedition to annoy and cut off one of the principle sources of British prosperity, will not the cannon of the Tower of London, announcing with so much fracas that victory, be the harbinger and passing-bell of ruin to English commerce in India? Is not Nelson the Xerxes, who, with his numerous army, defeated the three hundred Spartans, and burnt Athens? But Themistocles flourished, and Xerxes was destroyed. If Bruyes, like Leonidas, preferred death to a dishonourable capitulation, have we not another Themistocles to avenge the blood of so many heroes? And does not Nelson himself owe his immortality to the glory of the vanquished, rather than to his actions?" It required all the sagacity of a republican Frenchman to discover one trait of resemblance between the Athenian hero and the Corsican tyrant; between Themistocles, the champion of liberty, and Buonaparté, the bravo of despotism.

to the French. They contended that, in return for such forbearance, the French ought to have been particularly careful to preserve peace; but, instead of this, they began to devise various pretences for interrupting the tranquillity of other nations. Under an illusive idea of liberty, as it was called, but which, in fact, was nothing more than an assumed right to subvert every established government, to abolish all religion, to plunder all property, to dissolve human society itself, they employed themselves in misleading, and imposing upon, the ignorant vulgar, pretending to reduce mankind to the state of the brute creation, and for no other purpose than to promote their own private interests, and to render the government permanent in their own hands.

Actuated by such principles, they made it their maxim to stir up and corrupt, indiscriminately, the subjects of every power, whether distant or near, either at peace or at war, and to excite them to revolt against their natural sovereigns, and lawful government. Whilst, on the one hand, their minister at Constantinople, pursuant to their general system of duplicity and deceit, professed great friendship for the Porte, endeavouring to make it the dupe of their insidious projects, and to accomplish their object of exciting it against other friendly powers, the commanders and general of their army in Italy, on the other hand, were engaged in the honest attempt of perverting the minds of the subjects of the Grand Seignior, by sending revolutionary agents into Anatolia, the Morea, and the islands of the Archipelago; and by the circulation of insulting manifestoes, particularly of one addressed by Buonaparté to the people of Macrio.

When remonstrances and complaints were made to the Directory on this gross infraction of the alliance subsisting between the two powers, the Directory disavowed all knowledge of the transactions, declared that the generals had acted without orders from them, that all cause of offence should be carefully avoided, and that it was their wish to strengthen, more and more, the bonds of friendship which subsisted between France and the Porte. The generals, however, still persevered in their treacherous conduct, and it became so notorious that they acted

in obedience to instructions from the government, that it was deemed useless to prefer any farther complaints.

The Grand Seignior farther observed, that, in spite of their formal renunciation of all schemes of conquest, the French had not only retained countries which they had subdued during the war, but had completely thrown off the mask, and, unfolding their secret views, had attacked, without reason or justice, independent states, who had, like the Porte itself, observed the strictest neutrality; invading their territories, when least provided with the means of defence, and subjecting them to their will by open force and hostility.

Thus, having thrown off all controul, and laid aside all regard to decency, and all appearance of decorum, unmindful alike of the rights of nations, and the obligation of treaties; and, as if desirous to convince the world that, in their eyes, friendship and enmity were the same thing, they made, in a manner altogether unprecedented, like a band of pirates, a sudden irruption into Egypt, the most precious of the Turkish provinces, and took forcible possession of the country, at a time when they had experienced nothing from the Porte but demonstrations of friendship.

When the Turks first heard the report of this invasion, they had a conference with the French Envoy, Ruffin; he declared he had no knowledge of any such event, but he gave it as his opinion, that, if such a project was in contemplation, it could only be intended to inflict vengeance on the Beys, and to attack the English settlements in the East. It was then distinctly stated to him, that the smallest attempt, on the part of the French, upon Cairo, on whatever pretext it might be founded, would be considered as a declaration of war, and, as such, would be resented by the Porte;—That the Ottoman empire would not suffer a handful of sand to be taken from their Egyptian territory; that every Mussulman would fly to arms for the deliverance of those blessed lands; and that if the chastisement of the Beys of Egypt were necessary, it belonged only to the Sublime Porte to inflict it, as they were her dependants; that the interference of the French in this business was inconsistent with the rights of nations, that the court of Great Britain,

being the dearest friend of the Ottoman empire, the Porte would never consent to the passage of French troops through her territory, to act against the British settlements; and that, in short, should even their expedition to Egypt have no other object than this, it would be equally regarded as a declaration of war; and Ruffin was expressly charged to state this to the Directory in these very words. Dispatches were, at the same time, sent to the Turkish Ambassador at Paris, directing him to make the same communication, and to require explanations on the subject.

This firm conduct on the part of the Porte drew from Ruffin the communication of a letter written some time before, but stated by him to have been received subsequently to this conference, in which the expedition to Egypt was avowed, and its object was stated to be to secure certain commercial advantages, by bringing the Beys to an account, and to injure Great Britain. It was also said, that an ambassador had been appointed to submit certain propositions to the Porte, favourable to her interests, and to adjust the affair in question; with the farther ridiculous intimation, that, were the Porte to declare war on this account, both courts would expose themselves to attack on the part of the Emperor.—This communication was made officially, and a copy of the letter was left with the Turkish Minister.

The delay in the receipt or delivery of this letter gave rise to a curious scene at Paris. For, when the Ottoman ambassador, in conformity with his instructions, demanded the proper explanation from Talleyrand, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, that minister, either supposing that the letter was lost, or wishing to deceive the ambassador, did not hesitate to disavow, in the most positive manner, the expedition against Egypt, and to assert, unequivocally, that Buonaparté's commission was limited to the conquest of Malta; observing, at the same time, that, the abolition of the order there being a measure conducive to the benefit of all the Turks, the Porte ought even to acknowledge it as an obligation. Talleyrand added, that the Directory had nothing more at heart than the maintenance of that peace which had existed between France and the Porte from time immemorial, and more and more to strengthen the ties

which bound them to each other—thus, as the Turkish cabinet observed, exhibiting a scene of the most artful duplicity; the glaring contradiction between the assurances of Ruffin, and that of Talleyrand, both of them *official*, being evidently a fresh artifice to mislead the Porte, and to gain time till they should receive intelligence of the issue of their attempt upon Egypt, which had not yet arrived. The Turks justly regarded such conduct as a demonstration that the French Directory, in the attempt to execute their plans of ambition, had chosen to lay aside all respect for those laws which were observed and maintained by every regular government, and that no faith whatever was to be placed in their professions and promises. And they drew the natural conclusion, from the whole tenor of the arbitrary proceedings, and despotic conduct, of the French government, that their project was to banish every orderly institution from the face of the world; to overturn human society; and, by the alternate employment of force and intrigue, to subvert the constitution of every established independent state, by creating, (as they had done in Italy) a number of small republics, of which the French was to be the parent, and so to render their own will universally predominant over all law.

It was not to be supposed that a paper, breathing such manly sentiments, speaking such strong language, and proclaiming such bold truths, would be viewed with indifference by the irritable rulers of the French people. Finding every effort to deceive the Turks fruitless, they at length, (in November, 1798) published an answer to their manifesto, in the Moniteur.—In this curious document, the Directory, totally evading the only true points of the question at issue, ridiculously asked, whether Egypt could be considered as valuable to the Grand Seignior? A country, they said, of which the chiefs were independent; and where his bashaw, an officer merely nominal and honorary, was either suffered to remain in a state of insignificancy and contempt, or else was sent back to Constantinople at the pleasure of the Beys. But, if the Turkish ministry could be supposed to be unacquainted with the conduct of the Beys towards the Porte, could they be ignorant of their deportment, for many years, towards France? In violation of the rights of nations, they had, it was pretended, plundered and oppressed all the

French who were in Egypt, whether sojourners, or settled in the country; and the French merchants had made fruitless applications for protection to the Sublime Porte, in conformity with existing treaties. The Beys were charged with having sacrificed those treaties to private engagements, which they had contracted with England, to harass, oppress, and annihilate the commerce which France carried on with Egypt. Ought their open hostilities to be any longer tolerated with impunity? The Directory would be guilty of a flagrant breach of their solemn engagement to exercise a vigilant care for *the protection of private property*, as well as of public rights and interests, were they not to repel such barefaced aggressions, and make just reprisals. It was not, they insisted, at Constantinople that the blow given to the Beys in Egypt should be reprobated, but at London; inasmuch as, in striking at the Mamelukes, the French government had aimed a blow at England, with which the Beys had made common cause, as appeared from a letter which, it was asserted, (without any foundation) had been sent by them to Admiral Nelson, before the battle of Aboukir; in which letter they had stated, to the Admiral, that he had only to destroy the French fleet, and that they themselves would take care to cut the French troops in pieces whenever they should land.

In the first place, the fact urged to prove the convention between the Beys of Egypt and the Cabinet of Great Britain, (which existed only in the manifestoes of the Directory) had not the smallest foundation in truth. When Lord Nelson, then in quest of the French, first touched at Alexandria, the Egyptians had heard nothing whatever of the French; of course the Beys could not make any such communication to him. And when he returned to Egypt, in consequence of the intelligence which he had received from a Greek Governor, the French were in possession of the port of Alexandria, and no communication whatever with the shore took place, previous to the action; as the whole time, which was but short, from the period of the discovery of the French fleet to the commencement of the battle, was employed in the necessary preparations for the dreadful conflict. When one falsehood is advanced in justification of an unjust proceeding, it mostly becomes necessary to support it by others. But, admitting even the truth of the French

statement, that the conduct of the Beys to Frenchmen resident in Egypt had been improper, and even oppressive, did that afford them any right to invade a territory belonging to a neutral power and an ally, in order to inflict vengeance on the offenders? Was it not consistent with the uniform practice of governments, as well as conformable to the spirit and the letter of the law of nations, to make application for redress to the *Sovereign?* The Beys were vassals, or tributaries, to the Porte, who claimed, and who possessed, the right of Sovereignty in Egypt. The French government, too, were in alliance with the Porte; therefore, every motive of duty combined with every rule of practice, and every obligation of treaty, to proscribe and condemn every other mode of proceeding than a regular application to the Ottoman government, accompanied by a demand of satisfaction for injuries sustained. But the truth was, that no injury whatever had been sustained by the French; that the whole manifesto of the Directory was a tissue of profligate falsehoods, without a single fact to support it, well calculated indeed to impose on the credulity of those hapless beings over whom they exercised a despotic sway, but utterly unqualified to stand the test of impartial examination. It was extended to a great length, and went, in substance, to persuade the world, that the Turks had no cause for complaint against the French, who were their faithful friends and good allies; and that the majority of the Divan were influenced by British gold to act in opposition to the interests of their country. It was not found convenient to notice the very important fact of the conversation which had passed between Talleyrand and Ali-Effendi, the Turkish Ambassador at Paris. And the Directory little expected, that the most complete contradiction of all their assertions would very soon be supplied by their own commanders and emissaries. In fact, the letters from Egypt, which were intercepted towards the close of the year 1798, and were, in part, published by the British government, contain the fullest and most unimpeachable evidence of the base perfidy of the Directory, and of the utter contempt of truth displayed in all their public communications. In short, there exists the testimony of the leader of this expedition to the fact, that the French meant to assume the Sovereignty of Egypt, and to retain possession of it as a French Colony. *

* "Vous savez," says Buonaparté to Kleber, in a letter addressed to him at the moment when he deserted his post and fled from Egypt,—"apprécier aussi bien que moi, Citoyen

The Directory, however, were now in full possession of supreme power, and the people were placed in such an abject state, as to see only with *their* eyes, and to hear only with *their* ears. A military conscription was enforced, with accustomed severity, and every means taken to increase the army, with all possible expedition. Nor were these arbitrary measures confined solely to France herself,—they were extended, with equal rigour, to the conquered countries, which she had annexed to her dominions. In the Low Countries, in particular, the most rigorous and tyrannical means were adopted for bringing the inhabitants into the French ranks, and their property into the French treasury. Churches and monasteries were pillaged; the priests were proscribed, banished, or executed; and requisitions of every kind were employed to reduce the people to poverty, wretchedness, and despair. Their sufferings were such, that they had recourse to arms, without the smallest prospect of success. A partial insurrection took place, which was very soon quelled, and only served as a pretext for the infliction of fresh injuries.

The King of Naples, as has been already stated, had prepared himself to resist the expected incursions of the French into his territory.—With means, however, not adequate to the task which he undertook to accomplish, he began his attack on the troops stationed in the new Roman Republic, after issuing a proclamation, in which he promised to emancipate the people of Rome from the yoke of France.—But, previous to this hostile movement, his Sicilian Majesty had received from the

General, *combien la* POSSESSION *de L'Egypte est importante à la France.*" At the same time, the wily Corsican earnestly intreats his more honest successor to persevere in the same system of hypocrisy and falsehood, which he had uniformly pursued himself—"*persistez toujours dans l'assertion, que j'ai avancée,* QUE L'INTENTION DE LA FRANCE N'A JAMAIS ETE D'ENLEVER L'EGYPTE A LA PORTE." See Lettres de l'armée en Egypte, au Gouvernment Francois, interceptées par la Corvette de S. M. B. el Vincejo, dans la Mediterranée. Publiées par Autorité, pp. 6, 7. Poussielgue, a confidential officer, who was paymaster to the French army, and superintendant of the finances of Egypt, speaks more plainly in his letter to the Executive Directory, in which he gives them a tolerably fair account of the state of Egypt. "Quand nous sommes débarqués, les Egyptiens out cru, comme *nous le leur disions*, que c'etoit *d'accord avec le Grand Seigneur*; ils se sont soumis evec plus de docilité: a présent, ils sont bien convaincus du contraire; ceux qui paroissant nous servir se croient, *par notre* MENSONGE, autorisés á nous trahir, &c. Ibid. p. 59.

Republican Ambassador, at his Court, pretty strong indications of the revolutionary designs which the Directory had formed upon his Crown and Kingdom. This man, Garat, who was one of the regicides, had insolently demanded the release of all persons confined, for sedition or treason, in the Neapolitan dominions; and had made a compliance with this extraordinary demand the condition of continued amity between the two nations. The King, therefore, had only to chuse between unqualified submission, and determined resistance; and the alternative which he preferred was highly laudable, although his means were inadequate.

The first action took place at Porto Fornio, where the French obtained a complete victory. The Neapolitans retreated to Civita Castallana, where they were joined by a fresh body of troops, under the Austrian General, Mack.—But, though surrounded with strong entrenchments, they gave way to the French, under General Macdonald, who compelled them, after various engagements, to fall back upon Capua.

While preparations were making for the siege of this fortress, the Neapolitan Peasantry, who had taken up arms, obtained various advantages over different detachments of the French army, and harassed the enemy so much that they were reduced to the greatest difficulties. At this critical juncture, Commissioners arrived at the French Camp from Naples, with whom the French General Championnet gladly concluded an armistice, on the condition that Capua, with all its stores and artillery, should be surrendered to the French, together with the whole tract of country from thence to Acerra, in the vicinity of Naples. Some further territorial advantages were ceded to the French by this treaty, who were also to receive ten millions of livres, about four hundred and sixteen thousand pounds sterling. This armistice was signed on the 21st of January, 1799. The King of Naples had left his capital at the beginning of the month, and had reached Sicily in safety, on board Admiral Nelson's ship.

The armistice afforded an opportunity to the French commander, Championnet, to bring into action those revolutionary resources which

he had assured the Directory he had taken special care to secure. Popular tumults were immediately excited in the capital of the kingdom ;—the French faction prevailed ; Championnet, in violation of the treaty, marched to their aid ; forced the passes which guard the entrance to Naples ; took possession of the city ; secured all the forts ; disarmed the inhabitants ; and announced the revolution of the kingdom, in a proclamation, in which he told the Neapolitans, that they were at length free ; that their liberty was the only reward which France claimed from its conquest ; and the only clause of the treaty of peace which the army of the republic had just solemnly sworn, together with themselves, within the walls of their capital, and on the ruins of the Throne of their last King.

All who regretted the loss of a King were represented as maniacs ; and all who rejected proffered liberty were regarded as unworthy of protection, and fit only to be *cut off!* On the ruins of the monarchy was erected *the Neapolitan Republic,* and the government was vested in a provisional assembly of twenty-one Citizens, subject to the superintendence and controul of the French General. These events took place within five days from the conclusion of the armistice, and they were followed by all the customary effects of such revolutions, general confiscations and plunder. Soon after this, the revolutionary mania of the French extended itself even to the little Republic of Lucca, whose Constitution, which had resisted the shocks of two centuries and a half, was overthrown, and a new government, with the modern appendages of a Directory and two Councils, established in its stead.

Such was the state of the Continent in the autumn of 1798. Mr. Pitt had exerted himself to give a favourable direction to the stimulus produced by the victory of the Nile. The British Ambassadors, at foreign courts, had received instructions to assure the respective powers to whom they were accredited, and who evinced any disposition to resist the encroachments of France, of the most potent and effectual assistance which it was in the power of this country to afford. On the twentieth of November, 1798, the British Parliament met. In the speech from the Throne, the King, adverting to the battle of the Nile, which was truly

represented as a great and brilliant victory, observed that, by it, an enterprize, of which the injustice, perfidy, and extravagance, had fixed the attention of the world, and which was peculiarly directed against some of the most valuable interests of the British empire, had, in the first instance, been turned to the confusion of its authors; and the blow thus given to the power and influence of France, had afforded an opening which, if improved by suitable exertions on the part of other powers, might lead to the general deliverance of Europe. Reference was made to the wisdom and magnanimity displayed, at this conjuncture, by the Emperor of Russia, and to the decision and vigour of the Ottoman Porte, as having shewn that those powers were impressed with a just sense of the present crisis; and their example, joined to the disposition manifested, almost universally, in the different countries, struggling under the yoke of France, was considered as a powerful encouragement to adopt that vigorous line of conduct, which experience had proved to be alone consistent with security or honour.

The address experienced but little resistance in either House; thanks and suitable rewards were voted to the gallant Nelson, and his brave followers, and to the Admiral was given a title, calculated to carry the recollection of his heroic achievement to the remotest posterity. He was created Baron Nelson of the Nile. On the third of December, Mr. Pitt entered upon the most unpleasant, but not the least necessary, part of a Minister's duty, the detail of means necessary to be provided for the grand exigencies of the war. The whole expences of the coming year were stated to be £29,272,000. To meet this demand, the land and malt tax would supply £2,750,000; the lottery £200,000; the growing produce of the consolidated fund, £1,500,000; and the tax upon imports and exports, £1,700,000; making a total of £6,150,000, and leaving, of course, upwards of twenty-three millions to be provided for by other means.

In alluding to the duty on imports and exports, Mr. Pitt observed, that it had greatly exceeded the sum at which he had originally rated it; and that the total amount of the imports and exports of the year exceeded, in a large degree, the largest sum at which any man had ever ventured

to compute it.* In considering the means of providing for the deficit of twenty-three millions, Mr. Pitt reminded the House of the two fundamental principles which had been established, during the debates on the assessed taxes, in the preceding session, as the rule by which they were to be guided in providing for the supplies of the year. These were, first, to reduce the total amount to be raised by a loan; and next, as far as it was reducible, to reduce it to such a limit, that no more loan should be raised, than a temporary tax should defray within a limited time. It was upon these principles that the House had proceeded in providing for the public exigencies of the preceding year. But it appeared that the produce of the assessed taxes had fallen very far short of the original estimate. The deficit, however, occasioned by the frauds which had been practised for the evasion of that impost, had been fully supplied by the public spirit of the country, as displayed in the extent of the voluntary contributions. The meanness which shrunk from fair and equal contribution had been compensated to the public by the spontaneous exertions of patriotism. Mr. Pitt, after the admission of various modifications, had rated the produce of the assessed taxes at four millions and a half; and, although they had been most scandalously

* Mr. Rose, in a table annexed to "a brief examination into the increase of the revenue, commerce, and manufactures of Great Britain, from 1792 to 1799," which he published in the latter year, and which was the result of an elaborate investigation of the subject by some gentlemen connected with the administration, and who were well qualified for the task, thus rates the amount of imports and exports, from 1791 to 1799.

	IMPORTS.		EXPORTS.	
Imports In the year		Foreign and Colonial Produce.	British Manufactures	Total.
1792	19,659,000	1792 6,129,000	18,336,000	24,465,000
1793	19,256,000	1793 5,784,000	13,892,000	19,676,000
1794	22,288,000	1794 8,386,000	16,725,000	25,111,000
1795	22,736,000	1795 8,509,000	16,527,000	25,036,000
1796	23,187,000	1796 8,923,000	19,102,000	28,025,000
1797	21,013,000	1797 9,412,000	16,903,000	26,315,000
1798	27,857,000	1798 10,617,000	19,672,000	30,289,000
Average of these 7 yrs.	22,285,000	Avge. 8,251,000	17,308,000	25,559,000

evaded, they had yielded four millions; while the voluntary contributions already exceeded two millions. If he did not calculate the evasion, the fraud, and the meanness which had struggled to defeat the operation of the assessed taxes, Mr. Pitt said, he mentioned it with shame, at a moment like the present, in a contest so awfully interesting to every individual, and to the nation, there had been men base enough to avail themselves of the general modifications which were intended to relieve those who might have been called upon to contribute beyond their means, to avoid that fair assessment which corresponded with their circumstances, he was happy to find that the honour of the nation had been vindicated by the noble and generous aid of voluntary contribution, which had greatly exceeded the sum which he had stated.

The House having sanctioned the principle of raising a large proportion of the supplies within the year, by a system of taxation, which should make every man contribute to the wants of the State, according to his means, and having found the inadequacy of the mode, last adopted for carrying that principle into effect, they were now called upon by the Minister to adopt a different mode, more operative in its effect, and less subject to evasion. Mr. Pitt proceeded to show, that whatever benefit this principle was calculated to bestow, might, by a liberal, fair, and efficient, application, be carried to an extent far greater than had yet been obtained; an extent equal to every object of greater and magnanimous effort, to every purpose of national safety and glory, to every advantage of permanent credit, and of increased prosperity.

In order to accomplish this desirable object, he proposed to exact a tenth part of every income above a certain sum, by a more direct mode, and by a less fallible criterion, than the assessed taxes. The statement of income was to proceed from the party himself, who, if he were rated at a higher proportion than the actual amount of a tenth part of his income, might appeal to Commissioners to be appointed for the purpose; and these Commissioners were to be empowered to alter the rate on receiving the oath of the party to the fact. In this way, Mr. Pitt hoped that the disclosure of circumstances, from which many might revolt,

would be avoided; and, at the same time, every man would be under the necessity of contributing his fair and equal proportion.

Besides the Commissioners, it was proposed to appoint a Surveyor, whose business it would be to state to the Commissioners, the grounds of any doubts which he might entertain respecting the fairness of the proportion at which an individual might have rated himself. The Commissioners, if they thought the doubts reasonable, were to call on the party for further explanations. When, in the case of the assessed taxes, so many evasions were known to have taken place; when the consequences, which had resulted from a vague rule of exemption, and an indefinite principle of deduction, were considered; when it had been seen that, by the different modes by which exemptions were regulated, persons, who probably would have shrunk from a direct fraud, had been able, by different pretences, to disguise to themselves the fair and adequate proportion which they ought to have contributed, it became more than ever necessary to render every case of exemption precise, and to guard every title to deduction from the danger of abuse. To prevent the country from suffering by dishonesty, to prevent the willing contributor from being taxed to the utmost extent of his means, while his wealthy neighbour was indebted to his meanness for exemption, it was necessary to guard with greater strictness against every chance of evasion. When doubts were entertained, that a false statement had been given, it was to be competent for these Commissioners to call for a specification of income.

The different proportions of income arising from land, from trade, annuity, or profession, which should give claim to deduction, should be simplified, and stated with precision.—The Commissioners were then to say, whether they were satisfied with the statement which had been given; the Surveyor was to be allowed to examine, and to report, whether there appeared reason to believe that the assessment was adequate. When the day of examination arrived, the Commissioners were to hear what the Surveyor, and the party, had to alledge in support of the objection, and of the assessment, and to examine other individuals. The schedule, to be drawn up in such a manner as accurately to define every

case of exemption or deduction, was to be presented by the party, with his claim clearly specified. He was to make oath to the truth of this schedule. The party, however, was not to be compelled to answer; his books were not to be called for; nor his confidential clerks, or agents, examined. But if he should decline such examination, and other means of ascertaining the truth, the Commissioners were to be empowered to fix the assessment, and their decision was to be final, unless an appeal were made to the higher Commissioners, who were proposed to be appointed by the Act. In short, no disclosure was to be compulsory; but if the party objected to disclose, he must acquiesce in the decision of the Commissioners, who should not be authorized to relieve without a full disclosure.

It was evident, from this statement, that the Commissioners were to be entrusted with powers of an extraordinary nature, such powers as could not fail to excite great jealousy, and such as nothing but the paramount object of the public good could justify the Legislature in conferring; neither ought they to have been proposed, unless from a conviction that no other regulation would be sufficient for the purpose to be accomplished.—Mr. Pitt, indeed, seems to have considered his proposal in this light, and to have justified it on this ground. In order to obviate one inconvenience, to be dreaded from the powers to be vested in the Commissioners, he proposed, that they should take an oath not to disclose the information they might receive in their official capacity, nor to avail themselves of it for any other purpose unconnected with the execution of the Act.

It is a lamentable consideration, that, in order to secure a due collection of the taxes, which the necessities of the times have, at different periods, compelled the Legislature to impose, a multiplication of oaths has been found requisite. This is to be lamented on two grounds; first, as it has a tendency to multiply the temptations to commit perjury, one of the most heinous crimes of which a Christian can be guilty; and, secondly, as it tends to weaken the moral feeling, the religious awe, with which the sanctity of an oath, of a solemn appeal to the Almighty, for the truth of an assertion, ought ever to be regarded. The ill con-

sequences which flow from this effect of multiplied oaths are manifold, and have an influence, more or less direct, on all the religious, moral, and social, obligations, without which a society of Christians cannot long be holden together. It should, therefore, be with extreme caution, and never without an absolute necessity, that the Legislature should lend their sanction to the administration of a new oath.

To provide, as far as human regulations could provide, against false swearing, Mr. Pitt vested the Commissioners with powers to prosecute any man for perjury, who should have made a false statement upon oath. But, by parity of reasoning, the Commissioners themselves, if they disclosed what they were sworn to conceal, should have been subjected to a similar prosecution.

In estimating the probable amount of the proposed tax, Mr. Pitt had, of course, no criterion to guide him. Much must, of necessity, be left to conjecture.—He had, however, taken care to consult all the authorities, and to examine all the documents, which could throw any light on the subject. With a view to ascertain the amount of property derived from land, he had looked into various productions, in which the question had been treated. The earliest author, however, whom he consulted, was Sir William Petty, who wrote in the middle of the seventeenth century, * when the rent of land was stated at eight millions. At the latter end of the same, and at the beginning of the following, century, two writers of note, Devenant and King, represented the rent of land to be fourteen millions. Posterior to that time it was a received opinion, that a land-tax of four shillings in the pound was equivalent to about two shillings of what would be collected on the real rents of the kingdom, which were said to amount to twenty millions. Full twenty

* It was in 1666 that Sir William Petty published his treatise, entitled, "Verbum Sapienti," in which he gave an account of the riches and expences of the country, and shewed that England was then competent to bear taxes to the amount of four millions per annum. If, then, England could bear such a charge when the rental of land was only eight millions, and when her commerce was comparatively small, what charge can she bear when her landed rental is so greatly augmented, and when her commerce has increased in an infinite degree?

years before the present period, this was said, by a writer who was a Member of Parliament, and who, in a work which he published, expressly recommended the very principle which Mr. Pitt now recommended.—Adam Smith, too, in his Wealth of Nations, had made the same estimate, and supported the same principle. Mr. Middleton, who, at a subsequent period, was employed by the Board of Agriculture, had rated the cultivated land of the country to amount to little less than forty millions of acres. The average value of this land, Mr. Pitt estimated, for the purpose of his present calculation, at twelve shillings and sixpence per acre, which was assuredly much below its real value. This would produce, then, twenty-five millions a year,—only five millions more than the land was stated to yield twenty years before. From this gross amount Mr. Pitt deducted one-fifth, for allowances to be made to persons whose incomes did not amount to £200 a year, and for those incomes below £60 which were to contribute nothing;—thus leaving twenty millions as the taxable property produced by land.

He next directed his attention to the tax to be paid by the tenant, for the income which *he* derived from the land. The tenant's portion he rated at three-fourths of the rack-rent paid to the landlord; but that he might be in no danger of rating this property too high, he reduced it to five millions. The amount of tithes he estimated at five millions, but, allowing for deductions, on account of small livings, he meant to sink it to four millions. He then went over various other sources, whence income, subject to taxation, could be derived, and thus recapitulated the whole:

	£.
The land rental, after deducting one-fifth	20,000,000
The tenant's rental of land, deducting two-thirds of the rack-rent	6,000,000
The amount of tithes, deducting one-fifth	4,000,000
Produce of mines, canal-navigation, &c. deducting one-fifth	3,000,000
The rental of houses, deducting one-fifth	5,000,000
The profits of professions	2,000,000
The produce of the above sources of income, in Scotland, taken at one-eighth of those of England	5,000,000
Carried forward	45,000,000

	£.
Brought forward.....	45,000,000
Amount of income of absentees from Ireland.....	1,000,000
Amount of income derived from the West-Indies.....	4,000,000
Amount of interest from the public funds, after deducting one-fifth for exemptions and modifications.....	12,000,000
Profit from foreign trade.....	12,000,000
Profit on home trade, skill, and industry.....	28,000,000
	£ 102,000,000

The tenth of this sum, allowing for miscalculations, would produce ten millions, at which Mr. Pitt estimated the amount of his tax. As an idea had been frequently broached, that any tax upon the produce of the funds would be a breach of the faith pledged to the National Creditor, Mr. Pitt took some pains to shew its fallacy.—He observed, that when a general assessment upon income was to take place, no distinction ought to be made as to the sources from which that income might arise. There could be no fair objection taken by the stockholder to the measure ;—there could be no question of a breach of good faith, of national stipulation, with the Public Creditor, by thus imposing on him what every other subject of the realm was to incur. The Public Creditor enjoyed his security under the most sacred obligations of the State, and whenever an idea had been started in debate of imposing upon the stockholders, separately and distinctly, any sort of tax, Mr. Pitt had been prepared to reprobate the attempt, as utterly inconsistent with good faith and public engagements. Parliament had all along concurred with him in the feeling that no such tax ought to be levied upon them, and they had uniformly acted upon that feeling, on the principle that, as the public came forward and lent their money to the State, in the moment of its necessity, while, at the same time, they bore, in common with every other description of his Majesty's subjects, the taxes on consumption, they were to be secured against any imposts distinctly levelled at them as annuitants of the public; and the Parliament had felt this more particularly from the recollection of the duty which they owed to persons who had embarked so much, and identified themselves so intimately, with the State. Against any direct

tax upon the stockholder, then, Mr. Pitt protested; but the matter was materially different, when a tax was to be levied upon the income of every description of persons in the realm; when it was no longer in the power of the stockholder to say—"I could avoid this tax by removing my property from the funds to landed security, or to trade," every argument against including him in the assessment was withdrawn. The protection afforded to the stockholder was the same as to the landholder, the merchant, and the manufacturer. The duty, therefore, was the same, and every other description of persons in the country would have a right to complain, if, when they were called upon for a sacrifice of that extraordinary nature, so numerous a body of persons were to be exempted from the assessment. Mr. Pitt was confident, then, that every person who heard him would agree that the principle of the measure was not liable to any imputation of a breach of faith.—It could not be called a resumption of the annuity which had been granted to the Public Creditors, nor, in the most remote degree, an infringement of the original contract with them. They were, in this instance, only to do what every other body of men within the kingdom were to do;—they were to make a sacrifice of a part of their income to the necessities of the State, and they were to do it upon the principle of giving security and permanence to all which they possessed. He dwelt longer on this topic than he would otherwise have done, because he was aware that objections might be lightly and loosely thrown out against this part of his plan. He should say to the stockholder, as one of the public,—"If you expect from the State the protection which is common to us all, you ought also to make the sacrifice which we are called upon to make. It is not peculiar to you, it does not belong to the quality of your income, but it is made general, and is required from all; you could not embark your capital in any other species of security in which it would not be subject to the same charge." Mr. Pitt professed he did not know what objection the stockholder could make to this appeal.

Having thus stated the sum which he expected to derive from the tax upon income, he reminded the House, that, in the preceding Session, the assessed taxes were the only part of the public resources which was mortgaged for the sum of £8,000,000, borrowed for the public service

in 1797. He, therefore, proposed, that the sum now intended to be raised, in lieu of the assessed taxes, should, after its appropriation to the supplies of that year, remain as a pledge for the discharge of that sum for which the assessed taxes were a security, and also for the discharge of the loan of the year, beyond what would be paid out of the sinking fund. Taking the assessed taxes at four millions, they would have been mortgaged for two years after peace; and thus the advantage of the measure proposed was, that no greater sums would be raised on any individuals than those which had been hitherto paid, at least by such as had rendered the measure of the Legislature effectual; they would be relieved of a greater, than a proportional, share of their burden, and the time for which they were to bear it would be materially abridged. The scheme suggested would be productive of still farther advantages; it looked anxiously to the alleviation of the burdens of the country, by a great temporary exertion; it looked to the equality of the tax, and the general efficacy of the measure, conscious that on them depended her success in the great cause in which the nation was engaged.

By this operation the whole sum necessary for the expences of the year 1799, would be collected, except fourteen millions, which remained to be raised by a loan. Of this, however, four millions and a half were discharged by the operation of the sinking fund, consequently nine millions and a half were the whole sum to be added to the national debt.

Mr. Pitt considered it as unnecessary to go into any detail of argument to convince the House of the advantages attending the beneficial mode adopted last Session of raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year. The propriety of the measure had been recognized, and felt in a way the most gratifying to the feelings, and to the pride, of every Englishman. The principle had been proved to be the most wise and beneficial, although in the mode of carrying it into practice it had been so shamefully and grossly evaded. The experience which they had had pointed out the propriety of correcting the errors of that plan, and of enforcing and extending the principle. If they had been able, from the benefits of that measure, so disabled and crippled, to do so much, it was obviously their duty to seek for means of perfecting the plan;

and if regulations and checks could be found to remedy the abuses which had been committed, it was surely wise and proper that they should be made to apply to a more general and extensive scheme than that which had been already tried. It no longer rested upon theory, or upon reasoning; it was recommended by the surest test of experience; and if, by the efficacy of this plan, they had been able to disappoint the hopes of the enemy; to rise above all the attempts which had been made to disturb our domestic tranquillity; to remove the apprehensions of the despondent, and to shew them that all their fears of our inability to continue the contest were vain, to assert the high and proud distinction which we took in the maintainance of genuine government and social order; if they had been able thereby to animate the public spirit of Europe, to revive its dismayed energy, and to give a turn to the political aspect of the world, favourable to the cause of humanity, ought not the House to persevere in a cause which had been so fruitful of good? If they had proved that, at the end of the sixth year of war, unsubdued by all the exertions and sacrifices which had been made, our commerce was flourishing beyond the example of any year, even of peace; if our revenues were undiminished; if new means of vigour were daily presenting themselves to their grasp; if their efforts had been crowned with perfect success; if the public sentiment were firm and united in the justice and necessity of the cause in which they were embarked; if every motive to exertion continued the same, and every effort which had been made in the cause was a source only of exultation and pride to the heart; if, by the efficacy of these efforts, there was a prospect of accomplishing the great object of all their sacrifices, and all their labours; if despondency were dissipated at home, and confidence created abroad, should not they persevere in a course so fairly calculated to bring them to a happy issue?

Mr. Pitt called upon the House to do justice to themselves.—It was not merely owing to the dazzling events of the campaign that the country was indebted for the proud station in which she now stood. Great and glorious as those achievements had been, which could not fail to be a source of exultation to every British bosom, he should not detract from the high renown of all those persons to whose skill, vigour,

and resolution, the country was indebted for the exploits which had astonished and aroused Europe, when he said that it was not altogether owing to them, that she now felt herself in a situation so proud and consoling. The grand and important changes which had been effected in Europe were not merely to be ascribed to the promptitude, vigilance ability, and vigour of the naval department, whose merits no man could feel, or could estimate, more highly than he did; nor to the heroism, zeal, patriotism, and devotion of our transcendant commanders;—and he spoke particularly of that great commander (Nelson) whose services filled every bosom with rapturous emotion, and who would never cease to derive from the gratitude of his countrymen the tribute of his worth;—nor was it to the unparalleled perseverance, valour, and wonders performed by our gallant fleets, which had raised the British name to a distinction unknown even to her former annals, that they were to impute all the advantages of their present posture.—No, they must also do justice to the wisdom, energy, and determination, of the Parliament who had furnished the means, and the power, by which all the rest was sustained, and accomplished. Through them all the departments of Government had the means of employing the force, whose achievements had been so brilliant; through the wisdom of Parliament, the resources of the country had been called forth, and its spirit embodied, in a manner unexampled in its history. By their firmness, magnanimity, and devotion, not merely to the cause of our own individual safety, but to the cause of mankind in general, we had been enabled to stand forth the saviours of the earth.—No difficulties had stood in our way; no sacrifices had been thought too great for us to make; a common feeling of danger had produced a common spirit of exertion, and the people had cheerfully come forward with a surrender of a part of their property as a salvage, not merely for recovering themselves, but for the general recovery of mankind.—We had presented a phenomenon in the character of nations.

It had often been thought, Mr. Pitt observed, and had been the theme on which historians had expatiated, that as nations became mercantile, they lost in martial spirit what they gained in commercial avidity; that it was of the essence of trade to be sordid, and that high notions of honour were incompatible with the prosecution of traffic. Without

entering into any examination of the reasons on which this hypothesis was founded, he contended himself with the remark, that its injustice had been proved in England; for, in the memorable æra of the last year, Great Britain had exhibited the glorious example of a nation shewing the most universal spirit of military heroism, at a time when she had acquired the most flourishing degree of national commerce. In no time of the proudest antiquity could the people of this country display a more dignified character of martial spirit, than they had displayed during that year, when they had risen to the greatest point of commercial advantage.——"And," said Mr. Pitt, "they are not insensible of the benefits, as well as the glory, they have acquired; they know and feel that the most manly course has also been the most prudent, and they are sensible that, by braving the torrent with which they were threatened, instead of striking balances on their fate, and looking to the average of profit and loss, on standing out, or on yielding, to the tempest, they have given to themselves not merely security, but lustre and fame. If they had, on the contrary, submitted to purchase a suspension of danger, and a mere pause of war, they feel that they could only have purchased the means of future, and more deplorable, mischief, marked with the stamp of impoverishment and degradation; they feel, therefore, that, in pursuing the path which duty and honour prescribed, they have also trod the path of prudence and economy. They have secured to themselves permanent peace, and future repose, and have given an animating example to the world of the advantages of vigour, constancy, and union."

Mr. Pitt entered into a train of argument calculated to prove, that the new system of finance, now proposed for adoption, even considered, exclusively, in an economical point of view, was the best that could be pursued. He contended that, in any war of the duration of six years, the old plan of funding all the sums raised for its support, would leave, at its close, a greater *permanent* burden upon the nation than would be incurred, for six years only of its continuance, and one year beyond it, provided the sacrifice of a tenth of every income was made. In the old, unwise, and destructive, way of raising the supplies by a permanent fund, without any provision for its redemption, a war entailed the burden upon the age, and upon posterity for ever. This evil had, to

be sure, in a great measure, been removed, or corrected, by the salutary and valuable system of the redemption fund, lately adopted.—But that fund could not, of itself, accomplish the end in a shorter period than forty years; and, during all that time, the expences of a war, so funded, must press hard upon the people.—If, on the contrary, it had, at an early period of our history, been resolved to adopt the present mode of raising the supplies within the year; if, for instance, after the peace of Aix la Chapelle, the scheme of redemption even had been adopted, and persevered in to the present time, there would not have been more to raise, in 1798, for the seventh year of the war, that what was then paid of permanent taxes, with about one-fourth of the additional imposts now proposed to be levied. By the adoption of this plan, at length, the foundation was laid of a system which would make the country independent of all the future events of the world.

This system had, for its principle, the permanency of British grandeur, and the independence and happiness of a generation unborn. "You will feel," said Mr. Pitt, in conclusion, "that it is not only to the splendour of your arms, to the achievements of your fleets, that you are indebted for the high distinction which you, at present, enjoy; but also to the wisdom of the Councils you have adopted, in taking advantage of the influence which your happy Constitution confers beyond the example of any other people, and by which you have given a grand and edifying lesson to dismayed Europe,—that safety, honour, and repose, must ever depend upon the energy with which danger is met, and resisted. You have shewn the power of self-defence, which is permanent and unassailable. Standing upon the principles which you have assumed, the wild and extravagant hopes of the enemy will be thwarted; Europe will be aroused, and animated, to adopt a course so honourable; and surely, with the means of perseverance thus obvious, you will not think it prudent, or necessary, to shrink from your principles, or to take shelter in a peace which might be obtained by a more temporising conduct, but which would neither be safe nor durable.—But, Sir, I cannot encourage any sentiment so degrading; I feel, in common, with every Gentleman who hears me, the proud situation in which we have been placed, and the importance which it has given us

in the scale of nations. The rank that we now hold, I trust, we shall continue to cherish, and that, in pursuing the same glorious course, we shall all of us feel to be a source of pride and consolation, that we are the subjects of the King of Great Britain." He then moved the following resolutions:

"RESOLVED,

"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that so much of an act made in the last Session of Parliament, intituled 'An Act for granting to his Majesty an aid and contribution for the prosecution of the war,' as charges any person with an additional duty in proportion to the amount of the rates or duties to which, prior to the fifth day of April, 1798, such person was assessed, according to any assessment made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament in force at the time of passing the said Act of the last session, be repealed.

"RESOLVED,

"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that, towards raising the supply granted to his Majesty, there be charged, annually, during a term to be limited, the several rates and duties following, upon all income arising upon property in Great Britain, belonging to any of his Majesty's subjects, although not resident in Great Britain; and upon all income of every person residing in Great Britain; and of every body politic or corporate, or company, fraternity, or society, of persons, whether corporate or not corporate, in Great Britain, whether any such income shall arise from lands, tenements, or hereditaments, wheresoever the same shall be situated in Great Britain, or elsewhere; or from any kind of personal property, or other property whatever; or from any profession, office, employment, trade, or vocation; that is to say,—

"One one hundred and twentieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 60*l.* per annum, and shall be under 65*l.* per annum,

"One ninety-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 65*l.* but shall be under 70*l.*

" One seventieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 70*l.* but shall be under 75*l.*

" One sixty-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 75l. but shall be under 80*l.*

" One sixtieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 80*l.* but shall be under 85*l.*

" One fifty-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 85*l.* but shall be under 90*l.*

" One fiftieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 90*l.* but shall be under 95*l.*

" One forty-fifth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 95*l.* but shall be under 100*l.*

" One fortieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 100*l.* but shall be under 105*l.*

" One thirty-eighth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 105*l.* but shall be under 110*l.*

" One thirty-sixth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 110*l.* but shall be under 115*l.*

" One thirty-fourth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 115*l.* but shall be under 120*l.*

" One thirty-second part of such income, if the same shall amount to 120*l.* but shall be under 125*l.*

" One thirtieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 125*l.* but shall be under 130*l.*

" One twenty-eighth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 130*l.* but shall be under 135*l.*

" One twenty-sixth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 135*l.* but shall be under 140*l.*

" One twenty-fourth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 140*l.* but shall be under 145*l.*

" One twenty-second part of such income, if the same shall amount to 145*l.* but shall be under 150*l.*

" One twentieth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 150*l.* but shall be under 155*l.*

" One nineteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 155*l.* but shall be under 160*l.*

" One eighteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 160*l.* but shall be under 165*l.*

" One seventeenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 165*l.* but shall be under 170*l.*

" One sixteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 170*l.* but shall be under 175*l.*

" One fifteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 175*l.* but shall be under 180*l.*

" One fourteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 180*l.* but shall be under 185*l.*

" One thirteenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 185*l.* but shall be under 190*l.*

" One twelfth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 190*l.* but shall be under 195*l.*

" One eleventh part of such income, if the same shall amount to 195*l.* but shall be under 200*l.*

" And One tenth part of such income, if the same shall amount to 200*l.* or upwards."

Some few objections were made to the proposed tax by Mr. Tierney, who insisted, that while it professed to fall equally on all descriptions of property, it would be very little felt by the *monied interest*; and that it would affect a material change in society, by compelling persons of small property to sell what they possessed. The resolutions, however, were passed without a division.

It might reasonably have been objected to the plan, that it made its *maximum* of contribution begin at too low a rate of income; and that, on that account, it lost much of its character of *Equality*. For instance, to take twenty pounds a year from a man who had only two hundred, might compel him to give up housekeeping, and to alter his whole style of living. At all events, it would deprive him not of luxuries, (for such he could not have the means of enjoying) but of many of the comforts, if not of the *necessaries*, of life. Whereas the deduction of two thousand pounds from an income of twenty thousand would produce no such alteration; it would only reduce some few articles of luxury, or curtail the means of accumulation. If, however, the exigencies of the State rendered this sacrifice necessary in persons of slender income, the tax should have been so contrived as to make men of large income feel the inconvenience, and the pressure, in at least an equal degree, which could not be done, by only subjecting them to the sacrifice of an equal portion of income. In order to achieve this desirable purpose, it would have been necessary to increase the scale of contribution in incomes above a certain sum. It is probable, however, that Mr. Pitt was aware that such a proposal would prove destructive of his whole plan, by the opposition which it would excite; and he was too

good a practical politician to sacrifice a great public advantage, by a doubtful attempt to obtain one still greater.

The debate on the subject was renewed on the tenth of December, when the Report was brought up. The Bill was then opposed by Sir John Sinclair, Mr. William Smith, and others. The Baronet was of opinion, that only five per cent. should be levied on *income*, and one-half per cent. on *capital*. He objected to the measure on three grounds:—First, as it would promote emigration;—Secondly, as it would diminish the produce of the old taxes;—and, Thirdly, as it would raise the price of all the necessaries of life. He observed that, formerly, our principal taxes, arising from consumption, and not extending to many of the real comforts and necessaries of life, were, in a manner, voluntary. The Exchequer was enriched; the people were happy; and the profusion of government was happily checked by the conviction, that, if the taxes were carried beyond a certain point, the produce, instead of increasing, would be diminished. But if this Bill passed, he contended, the whole property of the country would, in future, lie at the mercy of the Minister. For though he now, very moderately, required only a tenth part of their income, he established a principle, that the government of the country was entitled to demand a certain portion of the income of each individual, and was also entitled to enforce that compulsive requisition by the strictest and harshest regulations.

The Bill was opposed by Sir Francis Baring, on the ground of its greater liability to evasions than the assessed taxes; and our commerce, he said, would be exposed to frauds without end. Such an insinuation from a commercial man, who must be supposed to have been master of the subject, in that respect, was entitled to serious consideration.—But he was no better a logician than a prophet, when he stated his dislike of the measure as a sufficient reason for predicting its failure.

Sir John Sinclair here substituted the *Minister* for the *Legislature*, and praised a mode of taxation for the very reason which proved its inadequacy to the purpose for which alone any taxes are justifiable—the good of the State; or, in other words, the welfare of the Community.—

Assuredly the *Minister* could have no right or title to demand one sixpence from the people; but it is evident, that unless the Legislature had a right to demand whatever was necessary for defending the honour and security of the country against the attacks of its enemies, the State could not preserve its independence, nor yet its political existence; but must fall an easy victim to the first formidable neighbour, who had the art to plan, and the resolution to pursue, its ruin. And, if it were true, that a tax on articles of consumption could never be carried beyond a certain point, it would be a sufficient proof of the propriety of having recourse to a different mode of taxation, whenever the state of the country should render it necessary, for self-defence, to go beyond that point of expenditure. If Ministers are profuse of the public money, or carry on a war on slight or frivolous pretexts, or without a strong and adequate motive, it is not in the unproductiveness of a tax, but in the integrity of a Parliament, that the Constitution has provided an efficient check, and an insurmountable obstacle. A war cannot be carried on without the sanction of Parliament, nor can it be persisted in, without its approbation.

Mr. William Smith approved the principle of the Bill, so far as it went to raise a certain portion of the supplies within the year. But he preferred the regulation of the preceding year to the present measure, because the former made it optional with the contributor, whether he would contribute much or little; whereas the latter rendered the contribution compulsory, and afforded no power of evading it by a diminution of expenditure. He declared his opinion, that the Bill was unconstitutional, unjust, oppressive, cruel, and fraudulent.

In answer to these various objections, Mr. Pitt observed, that he was relieved from the necessity of employing many arguments, as there was but one Member in the House, alluding to Sir John Sinclair, who was disposed to contest the *principle* of the Bill. Whatever authority might belong to that solitary antagonist, and no man had more, he seemed entirely to rest upon it, as he had not added a single argument in support of his position. There were others, however, who, although they concurred in the principle, and must be aware, that a measure of such

magnitude and importance must depend much upon the arrangement of details, and the regulation of provisions, evinced a resolution to check all attempts to bring those points again into consideration. Confessing the necessity of great and vigorous efforts for the salvation of the country, in which some of them, now, for the first time, had tardily discovered that our safety was involved, they did not wait to reject the measure upon any ground of final and invincible objection, but they came forward to resist it in the very outset, previous to a mature examination of its details, and to a sincere endeavour to correct its provisions.

Alluding to Mr. W. Smith's remarks, who had approved the principle of raising a considerable part of the supplies within the year; but had declared himself an enemy to any plan for rendering that principle effectual by a general tax, Mr. Pitt did not doubt but that the House would regard this as a most valuable concession! If it were necessary for the effort which they were called upon to make, if it were essential to the firm establishment of public credit, and to the future prosperity of the empire, to obtain that supply which was necessary for the vigorous prosecution of the contest, it was evident that it must be obtained by a tax immediately productive. If it were impossible, by an increase on the existing taxes on consumption, by the introduction of evils ten times more severe than those which were imputed to this measure, it was clear that nothing could realize the principle but some extraordinary and general tax. If Mr. Smith admitted, as he presumed he did, that such an increase of the taxes on consumption as would produce ten millions within the year was impracticable, it followed that there was no other mode but a tax upon property, so far as it could be discovered. The contribution, then, must be laid either upon capital or upon income.—From this general operation, however, Mr. Smith would exempt all those whom he was pleased to call, exclusively, the *useful* classes. In the class of useless, he had thought proper to rank all the proprietors of land, those men who form the line which binds and knits society together, —those on whom, in a great measure, the administration of justice, and the internal police of the country, depend;—those men from whom the poor receive employment, from whom agriculture derives its improvement and support, and to whom, of course, commerce itself is indebted

for the foundation on which it rests. Yet this class had he chosen to stigmatize as useless drones, of no estimation, or merit, in the eyes of society. When the consequences with which this light, flippant theory, the offspring of mere temporary unthinking policy, would be attended were fairly considered, Mr. Smith would find that his distinction between useful and useless classes was as little founded in truth, as the practical system which he had built on it would be consistent with the general interest of those whom he thought entitled to peculiar favour. The question, then, was, whether capital or income was the proper object of contribution? Mr. Smith had said, that capital was the criterion which ought to be adopted in the case of the commercial man, (he was himself, be it observed, a commercial man,) and income, when it was derived from land. Taking for granted that his principles were well founded, no less than three-fourths of the whole income liable to contribution was calculated to arise from that source. Even upon his own argument, then, he should not consider the measure as so incurable as to be utterly incapable of correction in a Committee. If he were sincere in his profession of a desire to facilitate the raising of a considerable part of the supplies within the year, why should he refuse to proceed further in a measure, which was, at least, capable of embracing three-fourths of his own avowed object; and which was, in other parts, susceptible of alteration and improvement? If, however, what had been so universally recognized as important to be done was to be done effectually; and the great consideration was, on which of these leading objects it would be most advantageous to the public, and least inconvenient to the contributors, to impose this general and comprehensive tax, Mr. Pitt was afraid, that to the very plan which Mr. Smith thought preferable, those objections on which he rested his desponding hope, that the country neither could, nor would, submit to the measure, would apply with aggravated force. Every objection, which he had so long, and so vehemently, urged against the danger of disclosure, would attach to those new theories of policy on which he would act. He was against disclosure. How, then, was he to ascertain the amount of that commercial capital, the profits of which he thought might justly be made to contribute?—Would he be contented with that loose declaration, which experience had proved to be so favourable to evasion? Would he recognize the justice

of a principle which he would utterly defeat and nullify, by the provisions he recommended to carry it into effect? What, then, did he do to support that great cause, to invigorate those extraordinary efforts which were necessary for our success in a contest, which all but a few, who had very lately got some new lights, had long considered to be connected with our existence? When appearing, for the first time, as a proselyte to the cause of his country, and of mankind, though standing in the new character of a convert, he still retained so much of the bias of his old opinions, that he denied the means of rendering those measures effective, which he acknowledged to be indispensable, and of carrying into practice that principle which he professed to approve.

Mr. Smith having launched into a general strain of invective against persons employed to collect the revenue in general, and against the surveyors proposed to be appointed under this act in particular, Mr. Pitt deemed it worthy of some pointed comments. The subject, he thought, appeared to be taken up merely as it afforded an opportunity of embellishing his discourse with the violent invectives, and offensive epithets, by which it was distinguished. He would not repeat the odious description which had been applied to the persons who were to act in the capacity of surveyor under the bill. What, Mr. Pitt asked, was the purpose, what the tendency, of such invective? What could be the effect of such reproachful language, so indiscriminately applied; but to bring into discredit those officers of the revenue, without whom it could not be collected, and without whom public business must be at a stand? Mr. Smith had said, that the surveyor was at liberty to surcharge to any amount, and that, pending the appeal to which such surcharge would give rise, the tax would continue to be levied on the whole of the demand, including the surcharge. What was the remedy which he discovered for this evil? He had said, in allusion to a remark of Sir Francis Baring's, that the discussion of the appeal might be rendered so intricate as to last for six or even for twelve months. This objection he had urged triumphantly, at the very time, too, when he stated it to be the mode which the person surcharged would adopt for his relief, at the very moment when he was compelled to acquiesce in the payment of a surcharge, from which he

took care that it should be impossible for the Commissioners of appeal to relieve him! It happened, however, that the grievance which had been pressed so strongly was only an imaginary grievance, for it was not to be found in the bill, and, in fact, could not exist. The surveyor's charge was not to be acted upon, in the first instance, unless it was confirmed by the Commissioners. The surveyor was to have no discretion whatever to add to the charge made on the contributor. He was not to be a person on whose discretion any assessment was to depend;—he was to *assist* the Commissioners with *information*, and to discharge that duty which his oath prescribed, of preventing evasion, where it might be within his knowledge that it was attempted. It had been said, in proof of the importance of the surveyor's office, that they had great influence with the Commissioners in other matters, where the revenue was concerned; but, when the characters of the Commissioners were considered, the remark would prove, that, instead of that profligate, worthless, class, which Mr. Smith had described, they were men who recommended themselves by the propriety of their conduct, and the performance of their duty.—But the surveyor was the only man whom the House were to regard as likely to be bound by his oath. In answer to this remark, it was asked, was there no distinction between the cases?—Was the temptation to perjury the same?—Had the man, who was sworn to the performance of his duty, the same reason to disregard his oath, as the man had who was endeavouring to avoid the payment of money to the State? —What, then, was required? A *particular* statement of income, to guard against the evasion which was practised when a *general* statement was only required. What was this but the means of correcting those frauds which every man's observation but Mr. Smith's had ascertained to be prevalent? That Gentleman, too, had ascribed another power to the surveyor which he did not possess; that of making extracts from the books of public bodies.—He had no such power; he was to have access to, and to make extracts from, those public books, to which, at present, any person might easily procure access for any purpose, even of mere curiosity. Any body might ascertain how much any mercantile house possessed in the three per cents. The surveyor, then, was authorized to suggest doubts, and to collect information; but he had no right

Another argument against the measure, which had been employed, both in the public prints of the day, was noticed by Mr. Pitt. It had been asserted that the proposed tax was a *tithe*, and that all tithes were equally unfavourable to industry. This argument, whether valid or not, did not, he contended, apply to the present case. The tenth imposed by the bill, was a tenth of the clear profits, after the expences of labour had been deducted. The more he had thought upon this particular subject, and upon taxation in general, the more he was convinced not only of the futility, but of the danger, of any attempt, by the distribution of imposts, to make any difference in that order, which the nature of society had already established. To proceed beyond the arrangement already formed, and beyond the provisions made for accommodating the proportion of taxes to the classes of property already marked, would be to dissolve all established principles, and to overthrow the fabric of society, which time and the progress of accumulation had reared.

Another curious inference was, Mr. Pitt observed, to be drawn from the observations which had been made upon the hardships incurred by persons possessed of life estates, of temporary incomes, and by those who received the rewards of laborious employments. It happened, singularly enough, that the public offices held under government, uniting in their nature profits derived from labour and temporary estates, were included in the operation of the bill. Now the very man who resisted the measure on this ground, among others, had proposed, on former occasions, as a greater resource for the national expenditure, that all those offices should be made to contribute largely to the public service. But the calculations furnished that night were not more exact than those which Sir John Sinclair had advanced, on the former occasion. The references, certainly, were not those of the board of agriculture; but Sir John had made the prodigious discovery, that, if all the public offices were placed on a reduced establishment, and others suppressed, the sum of ten millions might be saved to the public. Mr. Pitt was highly pleased with this project, and sincerely wished for the execution of it; but he was always unfortunately stopped in every attempt he made to go on with it, by finding that the entire expences of the public offices

amounted only to one-tenth of the prodigious saving which had been so confidently held out. The Baronet's attention had been engrossed by agricultural studies, and military tactics, or he might have known, that a Committee, appointed for the express purpose, had made a very different calculation.

In answer to a more specious, and, indeed, more solid, objection,—that it was unjust that the man who had an annuity or an income, the fruit of his labour, should pay in the same proportion as another who derived the same revenue from fixed property, Mr. Pitt said that the objection was altogether a fallacy. A permanent income, which was represented as never dying, and, as it were, the property of a man after his death, contributed on every exigency which might occur; the income from labour and industry was extinguished, it contributed but once; it was no longer the property of the same person; while the other, which was considered as the same property, was subject to renewed demands. This reasoning might be thought refined; but the answer, in his opinion, was fairly applicable to the case where the reason, why fixed property should contribute more, was founded on its supposed permanency, in opposition to the fleeting character of the other. How then was it possible to discriminate between the various kinds of property, or to enter into the details which could alone enable the House to apply any scale of exemption without an investigation more oppressive, a disclosure more extensive, than an thing which the Bill would permit? How much safer was it to submit to those inequalities which were the lot of man, and which it was not the business, nor was it in the power, of schemes of finance to correct! Could they even indulge a wish to correct those inequalities which arose out of the very nature of society? was the remedy proposed the proper remedy for the legislature to adopt? They had better forbear to attempt what was perhaps beyond the power of human legislation to correct. It was an enterprise that would hurry them far beyond their depth, and lead to consequences far more extensive than they could foresee, and might produce an overthrow of all establishments, and of all regular order, which could not be contemplated without apprehension. The principle of argument that went to remedy this supposed evil, belonged to the school of dangerous innovation, which ought not for a moment to be

indulged. Mr. Pitt, having thus replied to all the objections pressed against his plan, concluded with a brief statement of its effects. Its consequence would be, that whoever contributed a tenth of his income under the bill, would have a tenth less to spend, to save, or to accumulate. At the end of the war such contributors would be no poorer; they would only be to the extent of the tax, less increased in wealth than they would have been. The advantages of it were in a particular manner favourable to those on whom it would fall, as, instead of accumulating taxes on consumption, it would bring all income to contribute equally, and include a great deal of that which, in the hands of persons who spent less than their income, escaped contribution altogether. Laying aside the proud idea of the vigour, permanence, and renovated energy, which the measure secured, there was no one case which, with a view to that class who were really willing to save for the benefit of those for whom they were bound to provide, required some modification. This was in favour of persons who had recourse to that easy, certain, and advantageous mode of providing for their families by ensuring their lives. The Bill allowed a deduction for what was paid on such account.

"Such," said Mr. Pitt, "is the general view of the merits of this important question. It is one which has engaged much of my serious attention, and I am far from presuming that it has already attained the perfection of which it is capable. The inequalities objected to it are not peculiar to its nature; they arise from our social state itself, and the correction of that order, we cannot, as we ought not to, attempt to alter. It would be a presumptuous attempt to derange the order of society, which would terminate in producing confusion, havock, and destruction, and with a derangement of property, and in the overthrow of civilized life."

[1799.] The motion for the farther consideration of this important measure was carried by one hundred and eighty-three votes against *seventeen*. The Bill underwent some farther discussion, at different periods, but experienced very little more opposition in its progress

through the House of Commons. In the Lords it was strongly opposed by Lords Suffolk and Holland, and by the Duke of Bedford; and was supported, principally, by Lords Auckland and Grenville, and the Chancellor. It having been asked, in the course of this debate, whether, if his Majesty's ministers could have foreseen the calamities which had resulted from the war, and the extension of territory which the French had gained by it, they would ever have embarked in it? Lord Grenville distinctly declared, for himself, that, had he been perfectly assured before hand, that all these events would take place, the subjugation and pillage of Italy, the conquest of Holland, the massacres in Switzerland, or even the murder of the King of France; these things, aye, and ten times more, he would have sacrificed, to stem the tide of those vicious and false principles, fantastically called philosophy, but in truth nothing more than the effusions of revolutionary madness.* Lord Holland, on the other hand, declared, that, had he been a Frenchman, it would have been the pride of his life to have been concerned in bringing about the Revolution; though he denied that, in such case, it would have been just to make him responsible for the atrocities which it produced. As to Lord Grenville's assertion, his Lordship could only mean to say, that if by the war we had preserved our own country from all the horrors of a revolution, produced by the diffusion of jacobinical principles, he would have purchased such a mighty advantage even at the expence of all the disastrous and serious consequences which had ensued from the war. But it might have been asked, if the war had not taken place, would these disasters not have been sustained? Would not the unhappy King of France have fallen a prey to the wickedness of his rebellious subjects? Would not the limits of the republic have been extended to the Rhine and to the Alps? Would not Savoy have been subdued, Switzerland subjugated, and Italy enslaved? Nothing but profound ignorance of the views and designs of the founders of the French Republic, the original promoters of the Revolution, as they are to be collected from their own recorded sentiments, could lead any one to answer these questions in the negative.

* Annual Register for 1799, p. 260.

In fact, it was early resolved to achieve all these monstrous plans of aggrandizement and conquest in war or in peace ; and it was also determined to provoke a war, at least, with the continental powers, for the purpose of acquiring a greater facility, and some flimsy pretext, for carrying them into execution. The notion promulgated by Lord Holland, that a man who had contributed to produce the revolution, was not responsible for its consequences, could not stand the test of examination.—For if a man persisted, in spite of remonstrance or reproof, in subverting all the existing establishments of a country, in the delusive hope of meliorating the condition of the people, when told, too, that the most calamitous consequences would result from the adoption of his proposed innovations, to allow him to take refuge from the badness of his actions, in the goodness of his intentions, would be a species of political morality, the soundness of which might fairly, and *justly*, be disputed.

The Duke of Bedford took occasion to advance a strange proposition, that all persons concurred in the expediency of abolishing tithes, if a proper substitute could be found. This the Chancellor most peremptorily denied. There was, perhaps, no one question, he truly observed, on which such a variety of opinions prevailed, nor were tithes confined to the Clergy ; they were held by many of the laity, and held by as good a title as that by which the Freeholder held his estate. And certainly the clergy held their tithes by as good a tenure as that by which the estates of the House of Russel were held. The Bill passed by a decisive majority, and became a law early in April.

The financial arrangements of the year, however, were not completed till the beginning of June, when Mr. Pitt brought forward his account of expences and resources, drawn up with more accuracy than that which he had presented in December ; it now stood thus :

Navy.....	£13,653,000	
Deduct diminution of Navy debt, and money expended, in 1799,.....	1,403,000	
		£12,250,000

Brought up.....	12,250,000
Army.....	8,840,000
Votes of credit, 1798.....	1,000,000
Extraordinaries, 1799.....	2,500,000
Ordnance, exclusive of sea service.....	1,570,000
Miscellaneous services.....	3,264,351
Deficiency in land and malt.....	468,000
Subsidy to Russia.....	825,000
National debt.....	200,000
	£ 30,947,000
Vote of credit for 1799.....	3,000,000

To meet this increased demand, a farther supply of £315,000 was necessary. And this Mr. Pitt proposed to raise, by an aditional duty of four shillings per cwt. on clayed sugars from the British plantations, which, reckoning the consumption at 200,000 cwt. would produce £40,000;—by withholding a certain proportion of the drawback allowed on sugar exported, £62,000;—by observing the same rule with foreign sugars exported, £14,000;—by a diminution of the bounty on refined sugars, £39,000;—by eightpence per cwt. on British sugars for home consumption, £56,000;—by a reduction of the bounty on coffee exported, £65,000;—and by a duty of twopence on all notes under forty shillings, £42,000: making a total of £318,000.

Mr. Pitt, having enlarged on the advantages proved to have already resulted from the adoption of the plan of raising a great part of the supplies within the year, took a brief view of the improvements which had taken place in the system of finance. In all the wars, previous to the present, from the time of the Revolution, the mode of raising money had been that of borrowing, and leaving to posterity the burden of paying principal and interest. The successful institution of the sinking fund had made a material alteration in this system. Its consequence would be, that, whatever might be the expence of any war, each year would carry along with it the extinction of a certain portion of the debt that might be contracted; and, in case of the continuance of some

years of peace, the whole of the national debt would, after the expiration of a certain time, be liquidated by the accumulating operation of that fund; so that our debt might rather be considered as an annuity for a limited number of years. In addition to the advantages to be derived from this source, the plan of raising the supplies within the year, whether considered as the means of speedily terminating the contest, or as a certain mode of enabling us to persevere in it successfully for any length of time, would tend to relieve us from all the lasting burdens which a great accumulation of debt would throw upon the country at a future period. Mr. Pitt asserted that we had ample means for supporting not only the existing burdens, but any greater burdens which the necessities of the time might compel us to incur. Supposing the consolidated fund to proceed as it had done for some years past, and that there should be no extraordinary rise in the price of stocks, it would, in the year 1808, arrive at its maximum. The intervening period would be one of great stress upon the country; but it would not be difficult to provide taxes during that time. If the House looked to the certainty of not being baffled in that on which the enemy founded their most sanguine hopes, and placed their chief reliance, while they meditated our destruction, they would have the satisfaction of seeing that those resources, which that enemy had been obliged to procure through the medium of robbery, confiscation, and murder, were furnished to us by honest industry, and by the free conduct of a generous and loyal people; and that in such abundance, as was sufficient to gratify every view of ambition which we might entertain. Mr. Pitt then entered into a long detail of calculations in order to shew, that the whole of the national debt might be extinguished in the term of thirty-three years of peace; that, supposing the war to be carried on for any length of time, it might be supported without the creation of any new debt; and that in case the war should soon end, and that an interval of ten years should occur between the conclusion of one war and the commencement of another; in that period of peace the sinking fund would discharge seventy millions of debt, and enable the country to enter into another war with superior energy, and increased means.

Previous to this financial discussion, on the same day, (the seventh of June) a motion had been made by Mr. Pitt for a grant to the King of £825,000 to enable his Majesty to make good his engagements with the Emperor of Russia. The motion was opposed by Mr. Tierney, who professed not to understand what was meant by the *deliverance of Europe*, for which the Russian Emperor had been stated to have taken up arms; and declared that he would not vote any sums for a purpose which he did not comprehend. This "curious doubt," as it was significantly termed, Mr. Pitt undertook to remove. But as the expression must be sufficiently intelligible to all but Parliamentary sceptics, but persons whose powers of comprehension have been destroyed by party-spirit, it is needless to repeat the arguments which Mr. Pitt employed on this occasion.—He did not, however, succeed in removing the film which obscured the mental sight of his antagonist, who contended that the explanation given made it clear that it was not merely against the power of France that we were struggling, but against her system; not merely to repel her within her ancient limits, but to drive her back from her present to her ancient opinions;—in fact, to prosecute the war until the existing government of France should be overthrown. This strange interpretation of his speech, this gross perversion of his sentiments, Mr. Pitt deemed it necessary to disavow. In correcting the misrepresentations of Mr. Tierney, Mr. Pitt observed, that, in the civilized and regular community, States found their mutual security against wrong not in territory only, they had the guarantee of fleets, of armies, of acknowledged integrity, and of tried good faith;—it was to be judged of by the character, the talents, and the virtues, of the men who guided the Councils of Nations, who were the advisers of Princes. But what was there in the situation of the French Republic on which could be founded a confidence which was to be in itself some proof that she could afford security against wrong? She had territory, she had the remains of a navy, she had armies; but what was her character as a moral being? Who was there to bear witness to her integrity? The Swiss Nation? Who bore testimony to her good faith? The States she had plundered, under the delusive, but captivating, masks of deliverers from tyranny! What was the character of her advisers? What the aspect of her councils? They were the authors of all that

misery, the fountain-head of all those calamities, which, marching by the side of an unblushing despotism, had saddened and obscured the fairest and the gayest portions of Europe; which had deformed the face of nature wherever their pestiferous genius had acquired an ascendancy. In fine, we were to look for security from a government which was constantly making professions of different kinds of sentiments, and which was constantly seceding from every thing which it professed; a government which had avowed, and which, in its general conduct, still manifested, enmity to every Institution and State in Europe, and particularly to this country, the best regulated in its government, the happiest in itself of all the Empires which formed that great community.

Mr. Pitt, having explained the grounds on which he thought no secure peace could, at present, be made with France, proceeded briefly to notice "a continued confusion" in Mr. Tierney's ideas. At first, he could not understand what was meant by the deliverance of Europe; and in the second effort of his inquisitive mind he was not more happy.—He had said he could not see any thing in the present principles of France, but mere abstract metaphysical dogmas. What were those principles which guided the arms of France, in their unprincipled attack on the independence of Switzerland, which had extorted his reprobation? Was the degradation, without trial, of the Members of the French Assemblies; —were, in short, those excesses, and that wickedness, in the contemplation of which Mr. Tierney said, he first learned to regard France as an odious tyranny;—would the principles which could lead to all these things be classed by him with the mere metaphysical abstractions of heated, over-zealous, theorists? He would still persist, (at least he had given the promise of considerable resistance to all arguments to the contrary) in saying that it was intended to wage war against principles. "It is not so," said Mr. Pitt, "we are not in arms against the opinions of the closet, nor the speculations of the schools. We are at war against armed opinions, we are at war against those opinions which the sword of audacious, unprincipled, and impious innovation seeks to propagate amidst the ruins of empires, the demolition of the altars of all religions, the destruction of every venerable, and good, and liberal, institution, under whatever form of polity they have been raised; and this, in spite of the dissenting reason of men, in contempt of all that lawful authority

which, in the settled order of things, superior talents and superior virtues attain, crying out to them not to enter on holy ground, nor to pollute the stream of eternal justice; admonishing them of their danger, whilst, like the genius of evil, they mimic their voice, and, having succeeded in drawing upon them the ridicule of the vulgar, close their day of wickedness and savage triumph with the massacre and waste of whatever is amiable, learned, and pious, in the districts which they have overrun. Whilst the principles avowed by France, and acted upon so wildly, held their legitimate place, confined to the circles of a few ingenious and learned men; whilst these men continued to occupy those heights which vulgar minds could not mount; whilst they contented themselves with abstract inquiries concerning the laws of matter, or the progress of mind, it was pleasing to regard them with respect; for while the simplicity of the man of genius is preserved untouched, if we will not pay homage to his eccentricity, there is, at least, much in it to be admired. Whilst these principles were confined in that way, and had not yet bounded over the common sense and reason of mankind, we saw nothing in them to alarm, nothing to terrify; but their appearance in arms changed their character. We will not leave the monster to prowl the world unopposed. He must cease to annoy the abode of peaceful men. If he retire into the cell, whether of solitude or of repentance, thither we will not pursue him; but we cannot leave him on the throne of power."

The writings of the economists and philosophers, (or, rather *philosophists*) of monarchial France, of the Voltaires, the Condorcets, the Diderots, the D'Alemberts, the La Meteries, and the Mirabeaus, here referred to by Mr. Pitt, however they might be subjects of calm contemplation to surrounding nations, were pregnant with the most serious mischiefs to the land which gave them birth. By gradually undermining every religious and moral principle, by holding up to ridicule, institutions consecrated by the veneration of ages, by converting the most sacred things into objects of derision, they ultimately succeeded in producing that *state of mind* in France, without the pre-existence of which, the "bold bad men," who first unfurled the bloody standard of revolt, would, in all probability, have failed in their efforts to subvert

the throne, to demolish the altar, and to destroy the whole fabric of political and civil society, in that ill-fated country. A more pestiferous race of beings than these literary conspirators never combined to achieve the dark purposes of universal destruction. Leagued, as it were, equally against the cross of Christ, and the sceptre of the Bourbons, they artfully insinuated their principles of impiety and treason, into the light, frivolous, and credulous, minds of their countrymen, through the acceptable medium of joke, ridicule, and sarcasm, which ever found a favourable reception with a Frenchman. It is not meant to deny that the corruptions and superstition which human artifice had introduced into the established religion of France, supplied abundance of materials for such a conspiracy; but the arguments by which it was attempted to expose these, were equally applicable, and meant to be equally applied, to the pure, unsophisticated, religion of the primitive church. Their main object was to relieve men from the dread of present responsibility, and of future punishment; to take away the strongest inducements to good, and the most potent dissuasives from bad, conduct; and, regarding only the temporal effects of thus brutifying the human species, they scrupled not to rob them, with unfeeling malignity, of that hope which can alone render the burthen of life supportable to a Christian; and of that consolation which can alone support him in the last stage of mortality.—Having thus opened the copious "springs of error, guilt, and sorrow," to poison the minds, to corrupt the principles, and to debauch the hearts, of their countrymen, these pseudo-philosophers, looking round on the wide-wasting scene of ruin which opened itself to their view, as the natural fruits of their own machinations, lived long enough to *feel*, and most of them to *acknowledge*, the impotence, as well as the wickedness, of their *philosophistical* system. And, in those moments when the infirmity of human nature triumphs over the vanity of reason, and the pride of philosophy, they deplored with bitter anguish, and heart-rending remorse, the fatal delusion which they had themselves created, and the loss of those religious comforts which the gospel alone supplied, and which they, with unchristian prodigality, had foolishly thrown away. The horrible effects of these principles have been sufficiently manifested in the *moral revolution* which they have produced, more or less, in every country, and in the general desolation which they

have occasioned in most. But still, as Mr. Pitt declared, they supplied no grounds for hostile interposition, on the part of foreign powers, until they were reduced to practice, in a way which interfered with the safety and independence of neighbouring states; until, in short, they not only wore a warlike aspect, but actually assumed the helmet and the sword.

Mr. Pitt produced some farther instances in illustration of the confusion of Mr. Tierney's ideas; who had said, that as the French republic and liberty could not exist together, he, as a friend to liberty, could not be a friend to France. Yet, in almost the same breath, he had declared, that he would not vote for any thing which did not tend to secure the liberties of that country; though to give him the benefit of his own proposition, not to wish the overthrow of France, was not to wish for the preservation of English liberty. Indeed, he had said, he would vote nothing for the purpose of overthrowing that tyranny, or, as he very strangely added, the rights and liberties of France! But how, it was asked, would he maintain his character of consistency, while he would not vote for any measure which went to overthrow the power of a government, in the contemplation of which he had discovered a gulph in his mind between the ideas of its existence, and of the existence of liberty?

As the assertion had been made by Mr. Tierney, that a republic in France was not contrary to the safety of other countries, and not incongruous to the state of France itself, he was called upon to reconcile this opinion with the admission, that liberty and the French republic could not exist together. Mr. Pitt, however, declared, that it had never entered his mind to make the overthrow of the French Republic the *sine quâ non* of negotiation or peace. If the republican regimen were characterized by the sobriety of reason, affording nourishment, strength, and health, to the members of the community; if the government were just and unambitious, as wisdom and sound policy dictated; if order reigned in her senates, morals in the private walk of life; and in their public places there were to be found the temples of their God, supported in dignity, and resorted to with pious awe and strengthening veneration by the people; there would be in France the reality of a

well-regulated state, under whatever denomination, but *obruit malè partum, malè retentum, malè gestum imperium.* Whilst republican France continued what she then was, then, Mr. Pitt declared, he would make war against republican France; but if he should see any chance of the return of a government which did not threaten to endanger the existence of other governments, he would not be the man to breathe hostility against it. He must first see the change of fortune to France and to Europe make its progress with rapid and certain steps before he relaxed in the assertion of those rights, which, dearer to Britons than to the whole world besides, because by them better understood, and more fully enjoyed, were the common property, the links of union, of the regular governments of Europe. He must regard as an enemy, and treat as such, a government which was founded on those principles of universal anarchy, and frightful injustice, which, sometimes awkwardly dissembled, and sometimes insolently avowed, but always destructive, distinguished it from every other government in Europe.

While Ministers were employed in the adoption of necessary measures for repressing the dangerous ambition, and counteracting the hostile designs, of our foreign enemies, their attention, and that of the country, were again directed to the insidious machinations of domestic traitors. In fact, the society of United Irishmen, undismayed alike by the defeat of their late desperate efforts, and by the undeserved lenity which had followed it, were still active in their endeavours to produce the separation of the two kingdoms, by an extension of their anarchical principles, and by recourse to the same means for their diffusion, and for their practical application, which they had adopted previous to the rebellion of 1798. They still maintained a close correspondence with France, and kept an accredited agent at Paris; and their boast of having made a common cause with the disaffected in Scotland, and in England, proved to be well-founded. In short, societies, in both these countries, had been formed on the same principles, and having the same object with the United Irishmen. In imitation of their policy, the United Britons had sent an agent to Paris, a man of the name of Ashley, who had officiated as secretary to the seditious societies, and

who had been arrested on a charge of High Treason, in 1794; * meetings were holden to contrive the means of procuring arms, to enable them to co-operate with a French force, which their agent was instructed to solicit, † as necessary to secure their emancipation. They took means

* See Report of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Commons, ordered to be printed, 15th March, 1799, pp. 22, 23.

† The agent sent to France, by this society, was entrusted with the following "Address of the Secret Committee of England to the Executive Directory of France:"

"*Health and Fraternity.*

"CITIZEN DIRECTORS,

"We are called together, on the wing of the moment, to communicate to you our sentiments. The citizen who now presents them to you, *and who was the bearer of them before*, having but a few hours to remain in town, expect not a laboured address from us; but plainness is the great characteristic of Republicans.

"Affairs are now drawing to a great and aweful crisis; tyranny, shaken to its basis, seems about to be buried in its own ruins. With the tyranny of England, that of all Europe must fall. Haste, then, Great Nation! pour forth thy gigantic force! Let the base despot feel thy avenging stroke, and let one oppressed nation carol forth the praises of France at the altar of liberty.

"We saw, with rapture, your proclamations; they met our warmest wishes, and removed doubts from the minds of millions. Go on! England will be ready to second your efforts.

"The system of borrowing, which has hitherto enabled our tyrants to disturb the peace of a whole world, is at an end; they have tried to raise a kind of forced loan;—*it has failed!* Every tax diminished that revenue it was intended to augment, and the voluntary contributions produce almost nothing. The aristocracy pay their taxes under that mask; the poor workmen in large manufactories have been forced to contribute under the threat of being turned out of employ; even the army have been called upon to give a portion of their pay to carry on the war; by far the greater part have peremptorily refused to contribute to so base a purpose, and the few that have complied, have, in general, been cajoled, or reluctantly compelled to it.

"Englishmen are no longer blind to their most sacred claims; no longer are they the dupes of an imaginary constitution; every day they see themselves bereft of some part of the poor fragment of democracy they have hitherto enjoyed; and they find that, in order to possess a constitution, they must *make one.*

to seduce the soldiers and sailors, administered oaths of secrecy, and neglected no measure which could strengthen their hopes of success in their wild and desperate project.

Government had contrived to watch these traitors with a vigilant eye, and having, at the beginning of 1799, collected sufficient proofs of their views and intentions, Mr. Secretary Dundas presented to the House of Commons, on the twenty-third of January, various papers and documents relating to this conspiracy, which were immediately referred to a Committee of Secrecy. It was not till the eighteenth of March, that this

"Parliamentary declaimers have been the bane of our freedom. National plunder was the object of every faction, and it was the interest of each to keep the people in the dark; but the delusion is past! the Government has pulled off its disguise, and the very men who, under the semblance of *moderate Reform*, only wished to climb into power, are now glad to fall into the ranks of the people. Yes, they have fallen into the ranks, and there they must ever remain, for Englishmen can never place confidence in them.

"Already have the English fraternized with the Irish and Scots, and a delegate from each now sits with us. The sacred flame of liberty is rekindled, the holy obligation of brotherhood is received with enthusiasm; even in the fleets and the armies* it makes some progress. Disaffection prevails in both, and United Britain burns to break her chains.

"Fortunately we have no leader; avarice and cowardice have pervaded the rich, but we are not, therefore, the less united. Some few of the opulent have, indeed, professed themselves the friends of democracy, but they have not acted; they have considered themselves as distinct from the people, and the people will, in its turn, consider their claims to its favour as unjust and frivolous. They wish, perhaps, to place us in the front of the battle, that, unsupported by the wealth they enjoy, we may perish, when they may hope to rise upon our ruin. But let them be told, though we may fall through their criminal neglect, they can never hope to rule, and that England, once free, will not submit to a few political imposters.

"United, as we are, we now only wait, with impatience, to see the Hero of Italy, and the brave Veterans of the Great Nation. Myriads will hail their arrival with shouts of joy; they will soon finish the glorious campaign. Tyranny will vanish from the face of the earth, and, crowned with laurel, the invincible army of France will return to its native country, there long to enjoy the well-earned praise of a grateful world, whose freedom they have purchased with their blood."

* About this time seditious hand-bills were industriously circulated among the troops to excite them to mutiny; and numbers of United Irishmen were detected on board our ships, tried, and convicted of sedition.

See Appendix to the Report, &c.

Committee made a report to the House, containing the result of their investigation, and a number of documents, in proof of the facts which they stated, and in confirmation of the conclusions which they drew. Here they traced the progress of the seditious Societies, in the different parts of the British dominions, from their origin to the present period; unfolding, in one connected chain of circumstances, their avowed objects and their real designs. Adverting to the State Trials, in 1794, when the prisoners were acquitted, they observed, that the evidence given on those trials, established, in the clearest manner, the grounds on which the Committees of the two Houses of Parliament had formed their Reports, in 1794, and shewed, beyond a possibility of doubt, that the views of these persons, and their confederates, were, in nature, completely hostile to the existing Government and Constitution of this kingdom, and went directly to the subversion of every established and legitimate authority." Then, adverting to the conduct of the London Corresponding Society, subsequent to the passing of the Sedition and Treason Bills, as they were called, they shew that delegates were employed to travel through the country, and to disseminate their principles wherever they went. These delegates were supplied with instructions by the Secretary, (Ashley) in the name of the *Executive Committee*, and they were directed to persuade the people, whom they were to address, that the sole object of the Society was Parliamentary Reform. In one of these instructions they remark,—"the design of the above articles is to remove misapprehensions relative to the safety of our association under the new laws. This part of your mission being effected, you are to strain every power of your mind to awaken the sleeping spirit of liberty; and you are to call on our Fellow-Citizens to be ready with us, to pursue our common object, if it must be, to the scaffold, or rather (if our enemies are desperate enough to bear up every evenue to inquiry and discussion) to the field, at the hazard of extermination, convinced that no temper less decided than this will suffice to regain liberty from a bold usurping faction.—But, to the end that we may succeed by the irresistible voice of the people, you are to excite, in every society, the desire which animates our bosom to embrace the nation as brethren, and the resolution to bear every repulse from passion and prejudice, which fails to deprive us of the sure grounds of argument." And in another part of the same instructions, the delegates

are told ;—" You are always to reflect, that you are wrestling with the enemies of the human race, not for yourselves merely, for you may not see the full day of liberty, but for the child hanging at the breast ; and that the question, whether the next generation shall be free, or not, may greatly depend on the wisdom and integrity of your conduct in the generous missions which you, and your fellow-deputies, now take upon yourselves."*

The researches of the Committee enabled them further to state, with confidence, that at the meeting of the London Corresponding Society, for above two years before the present period, it had been avowed, that the object of the Society, was to form a Republic, by the assistance of France. Reform in Parliament, or even annual elections, or universal suffrage, were, therefore, no longer mentioned.† In short, there never could be a doubt, that Reform was only adopted as a watch-word to amuse the credulous people who were duped by the more artful demagogues, and as well calculated to conceal, under a specious and plausible appearance, the revolutionary projects which they cherished in their minds, and from the contemplation of which had they been boldly presented to the view, numbers of their decided followers would probably have revolted.

For the same purpose, and with the same view, had *Parliamentary Reform* and *Catholic Emancipation* been the watch-words of the United Irishman, whom the Committee represented as having been incessantly labouring to disseminate their principles, both by means of secret combinations among such of them as had found their way into the navy service, and by extending their Societies, both in the metropolis and in different parts of the kingdom. The extent to which these practices had prevailed, and (notwithstanding repeated instances of detection and punishment) *were still carried on in the fleet*,‡ had been too fully

* *Report from the Committee of Secrecy*, p. 17 ; and Appendix, No. 4, p. 51.

† Ibid. p. 22.

‡ Report from the Committee of Secrecy, p. 28.

demonstrated by the evidence which had appeared in a variety of Courts Martial.* It appeared, that oaths had been tendered by the Mutineers to the crews, "to be United Irishmen, equal to their brethren in Ireland, and *to have nothing to do with the King or his Government;*" and that they had acted in the professed expectation of assistance from France; with the express view of co-operating *for the expulsion of the Protestants from Ireland, and the erection of a Roman Catholic Government*; † and it had been part of their plan to murder their officers, to seize on the ships, and to carry them to France or Ireland. In one instance, the following oath had been administered by these indefatigable adepts in sedition and treason.—"I swear to be true to the Free and and United Irish, who are now fighting our cause against tyrants and oppressors, and to defend their rights to the last drop of my blood, and to keep all secret; and I do agree to carry the ship into Brest the next time the ship looks out a-head at sea, and to kill every officer and man that shall hinder us, except the master; and to hoist a green ensign with a harp on it; and afterwards to kill and destroy the Protestants."‡— With these fanatical traitors, who, now that they were not under the immediate direction and superintendance of their chiefs, were as free from disguise as they were from remorse; the extirpation of Protestants seems to have been constantly uppermost in their minds, and to have been avowed without scruple or reserve; and it was, no doubt, considered by them as a pious work, which would secure them a remission of all their sins.

* An Abstract of the Proceedings in these Courts-Martial will be found in the Appendix to this Report, Nos. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

† Report of the Committee of Secrecy, p. 28. This part of the Report of the Committee affords the strongest confirmation of the opinion which I have before advanced, that the rebellion in Ireland was, on the part of the Papists engaged in it, grounded in religious motives, and had the extermination of Protestantism, and the establishment of Popery, for its leading object. It is only a matter of surprize that the government could sanction a doubt of this fact, or that any one could harbour such a doubt, after the strong and incontrovertible proofs which have been adduced in support of it.

‡ Ibid.

The mutineers in another ship were proved to be connected with Corresponding Societies at Nottingham. The oath which they had attempted to administer was "to carry the ship into an enemy's port, either French, Dutch, or Irish;" and they meant, in the event of being brought into action with an enemy's ship, to shoot their own officers on the quarter-deck.

While these proceedings of the United Irishmen in the fleet exhibited a dreadful picture of their sanguinary designs, and of the similarity of their views and principles to those which had produced so much calamity and bloodshed in Ireland, their conduct on shore had been equally atrocious. It was proved, to demonstration, that, among the various bodies enlisted in any part of Great Britain, for the purposes of sedition and treason, the Societies which had been formed by the United Irishmen in this country were, in all respects, the most formidable, particularly at that moment, whether considered with a view to their combinations, and their actual numbers, or the atrocious nature of the designs of which they were preparing, in a very short time, to attempt the execution, in direct co-operation with France. The danger to be apprehended from these Societies was much increased, by the constant communication which they maintained with the Societies in Ireland; by their mutual confidence in each other, and by the alarming circumstance of their being, at that moment, subject to the same secret direction, and to the same chiefs. Indeed, the unity of design, and the chain of connection, were strongly proved by an incidental circumstance, that of the impression of the seal used by the 'London Society' being the same with that of a seal found on Lord Edward Fitzgerald, at the time of his apprehension.—The Members of these Societies had been long considerable; many Irish, ordinarily resident in England, chiefly among the lowest classes of the community, had been gradually induced to become Members. But the most active part consisted of those Irish Rebels, who had fled to this country, rendered desperate by their crimes, not daring to return to Ireland, and either unable to make their way to the countries subject to France, or not receiving sufficient encouragement to attempt it, they remained here, waiting for the opportunity of executing those violent and desperate projects, to which they had become familiar;—and they

appeared to be under the direction of some persons of a higher class, who sometimes furnished pecuniary aid, and who formed the Committee, by means of which a constant correspondence was carried on, through Hamburgh, with France.*

Among these plans there was good reason to believe that, early in 1798, it was seriously in agitation among the conspirators in Ireland, to convey, in small vessels, from Ireland to England, a great number of united Irishmen; and to land them on different parts of the coast, with instructions to divide themselves into small bodies, and to endeavour to make their way to the capital, in a manner the least liable to suspicion, under the disguise of those trades and occupations in which the Irish, commonly resorting hither, are principally engaged.—Their object was represented to have been that of co-operating with the Corresponding Society in effecting an insurrection in London, at the time of the explosion of the rebellion in Ireland, for the purpose of distracting the military force, and of preventing reinforcements from being sent to that country; and the plan was said to have failed, from the Corresponding Society shrinking from the execution of it. About the same period, another project was secretly formed for collecting, at one point, a chosen body of the most determined of the United Irish employed on the river Thames, to whom a new oath of secrecy, obedience, and fidelity, was to be administered. Large rewards were to be promised. They were to be kept wholly ignorant of the precise service which they were intended to perform, till the moment of its execution, which was to take place as soon as an attack on some part of the coast, by the French, should be announced. They were then to be privately armed with daggers, to be put under leaders of known talents and courage, and formed into three divisions, and were to make an attack, by surprize, at the same moment, on both Houses of Parliament, on the Tower, and on the Bank.†

The intelligence which had, from time to time, been obtained by Government, respecting the plans and proceedings of the conspirators,

* Reports of the Committee of Secrecy, p. 30.

† Ibid.

the seizure and detention of some of their intended leaders, and, possibly, the timidity or reluctance of some of the parties concerned, prevented any open attempt to realize these extravagant designs, when they were first in contemplation.—But, notwithstanding the continuance of every precaution, and, although the conspirators could not be ignorant of the prepared and formidable force, and of the determined spirit, and general loyalty with which such an enterprize would be immediately resisted, the Committee had acquired undoubted proofs, that plans of this nature were now, more than ever, in agitation. Attempts were actually making, by agents from Ireland, to concert, with the French Government, the time for a fresh and general insurrection in Ireland. Intelligence had been received that, in the ports of France, the utmost diligence was used in preparing another expedition to co-operate with the rebels in that kingdom. And a plan was still in agitation for creating an insurrection in London, in order to divert the attention of the military from the points of attack.*

After detailing the various circumstances of the foul conspiracy which had come under their cognizance, the Committee proceeded to state the impression which they had made upon their minds, and to suggest the means which to them appeared proper for checking the progress of this destructive spirit. They stated, that the safety and tranquillity of these kingdoms had, at different periods, from the year 1791 to the present time, been brought into imminent hazard, by the traitorous plans and practices of societies, acting upon the principles, and devoted to the views, of our inveterate foreign enemy. That, although the society of United Irishmen had alone been enabled to attain its full strength and maturity, yet the societies instituted on similar prineiples in this country had all an undoubted tendency to produce similar effects, if they had not been checked by the general demonstrations of the zeal and spirit of his Majesty's faithful subjects, and by the timely and judicious use of those extraordinary powers which Parliament had, in its wisdom, from time to time, confided to his Majesty's government. That, either directly or indirectly, a continual intercourse and connection had been maintained

* Ibid. p. 29, 30.

between all these societies in Great Britain and Ireland, and that the real objects of the instigators of these proceedings, in both kingdoms, were no other than the entire overthrow of the British constitution, the general confiscation of property, and the erection of a democratic republic, founded on the ruins of all religion, and of all political and civil society; and framed after the model of France.

The vigorous resistance opposed to the rebellion in Ireland, the success of the measures which had been employed for detecting and defeating the designs of the conspirators here, and the general and ardent spirit of loyalty and attachment to the laws and constitution, had hitherto counteracted the progress of the mischief, and averted impending danger; but even these circumstances by no means appeared to the Committee to justify the hope, that the mischief was eradicated, or the danger passed. The principles and views of the conspirators remained unchanged.—Their reliance on the assistance and co-operation of France, by which they expected ultimately to effect their purposes, continued undiminished. And the system of those secret societies, which were at once the instruments of seditious conspiracy at home, and the channel of treasonable correspondence with France, though in many parts broken and interrupted, was by no means destroyed. The activity of the societies in their endeavours to gain proselytes kept pace with the hostile preparations of the enemy; and the principle of secrecy, generally enforced by unlawful oaths, which was the great characteristic of these societies, peculiarly fitted them for the most desperate enterprizes, and, by holding out the prospect of security, increased the means of seduction. It had, at the same time, an obvious tendency to elude detection in the first instance, and to defeat legal inquiry in the next. To this principle, therefore, in the opinion of the Committee, such farther measures as Parliament in its wisdom might think fit to adopt for the public safety, should be more immediately and decisively pointed.

The Committee expressed their satisfaction at the powers which, in conformity to the ancient practice, and true principles of the constitution, had, from time to time, as the urgency required, been confided to his Majesty's government; and they felt it their duty particularly to remark,

that the power of arresting and detaining suspected persons, (a remedy so constantly resorted to by our ancestors, in all cases of temporary and extraordinary danger) had, under the present new and unprecedented circumstances, been found particularly efficient. It had greatly interrupted and impeded the correspondence with the enemy, and had checked, from time to time, the progress and communication of sedition and treason at home. But, from particular circumstances, of which the Committee had obtained a knowledge, they were compelled to remark, that the good effects of this measure would be rendered more complete, and the public tranquillity better secured, if the leading persons who had been, or might be thereafter, detained on suspicion of treasonable practices, were in future to be kept in custody in places sufficiently distant from the metropolis.

The whole of the secret information which had been laid before the Committee had strongly confirmed them in their opinion of the necessity of confiding these extraordinary powers to his Majesty's government; and the very circumstance which created that necessity, and which continued, at this time, to operate more powerfully than ever, had rendered it their peculiar study to abstain from disclosing, in its full extent, the particular information, of which they had stated to the House the general result, and on which their judgment was founded; but they trusted that they had laid before the House sufficient grounds to justify their persuasion, that the multiplied and various attempts, by which the enemies to their country carried on their dangerous conspiracies, could only be defeated by a corresponding vigilance on the part of Government, and by the exercise of such additional powers, as might, from time to time, be entrusted to it by Parliament, and might be best adapted to the peculiar exigency of the moment. And although they did not think it any part of their province to suggest particular measures, the consideration of which must be left to the wisdom of Parliament, they could not forbear particularly and earnestly to press their unanimous opinion, that the system of secret societies, the establishment of which had, in other countries, uniformly preceded the aggression of France, and, by facilitating the progress of her principles, had prepared the way for her arms, could not be suffered to exist in these kingdoms, compatibly with the safety

of their government and constitution, and with their security against foreign force and domestic treason.

But if this growing and formidable evil could be effectually repressed, and if the same system of vigilance and precaution which had been successfully adopted for some years past, was adhered to, there was every reason to look forward with confidence to the ultimate disappointment and defeat of the projects which had been so long pursued by our foreign and domestic enemies. Impressed with a just sense of the blessings enjoyed under our happy constitution, which distinguished this country from every nation in Europe, all ranks and conditions in society had shewn their determination to preserve those blessings entire, and had stood forward with a becoming ardour and alacrity in their defence.—While this laudable spirit continued to pervade every part of the kingdom, and while the wisdom of the legislature encouraged and directed its exertions for the public safety, the committee entertained a full conviction, that the religion, the laws, and the constitution of Great Britain, and with them the interests and happiness of all classes of his Majesty's subjects, would, in the midst of surrounding danger and calamity, and in spite of every machination at home or abroad, rest, under the protection of Divine Providence, on the surest basis, secured by the energy and firmness of the government, and by the courage, the patriotism, and the virtue, of the nation.*

This report unfolded a complicated scene of treason and rebellion, and afforded a strong proof of the truth of a remark which has often been made, that Jacobinism is *an active principle*; its votaries are never in a quiescent state; detection only serves as a motive for increased circumspection; and it most unhappily appears, that continued rigour, and exemplary punishment, are alone adequate to secure society from the horrible effects of its murderous combinations.

On the 19th of April, Mr. Pitt took up the subject of the report in the House, and proposed, as remedies for the evils which it detailed, to renew

* Report from the Committee of Secrecy. Pp. 32, 33.

the act for enabling his Majesty to arrest and detain persons suspected of high treason, with some amendments; and to pass another act for the suppression of sedition and seditious societies. The proposed amendment in the first of these acts was the introduction of a clause to empower his Majesty to transfer persons arrested under the act to any place within the kingdom, which might be deemed eligible. The reason assigned for this regulation was, that, both in England and in Ireland, the designs of the conspirators had continued to be conducted under the direction of persons in custody, on charges of being the authors of the conspiracy, or guilty upon their own confession.

Secret societies, Mr. Pitt observed, were, in their nature, totally repugnant to the genius of the British Constitution, and strange to the habits of the nation. They were clearly of foreign growth; and while the Parliament were bound to discourage them, they could employ, with the more satisfaction, the strong measures which were necessary for their suppression, because they must be sensible that they did not trench upon the principles, or the spirit, of that liberty which we inherited from our ancestors; that we did not impair those privileges which gave sanction to the great right of petition in all recognized classes of men, and with none of which these new descriptions of persons could at all be confounded. The societies in question were now so clearly proved to be such an abuse of the privileges of the British Constitution, so entirely inconsistent with all government, that they ought immediately to be suppressed. But, as all the members might not be equally implicated in the guilt of the society, it was proposed, in the intended regulations, to make a distinction between those who had been misled, and those who were decidedly criminal. On this account, the measures for suppressing these bodies were to be only prospective, not to aim at punishment, but prevention. A mark was to be set on the house where the pestilential contagion prevailed, and then those who entered would deserve to perish. It was therefore to be enacted, that if any person, after a certain day, should continue to be a member of such societies, they should, upon summary conviction before a magistrate, be liable to a fine, to be summarily inflicted; but, as there would be different degrees of guilt, it was proposed to give an option to proceed by summary con-

viction and fine, or by way of indictment in any court of record, leaving it to the discretion of the court to punish the offenders by fine or imprisonment; or, in cases of greater aggravation, by transportation. The masters of the house, whether public or private, at which unlawful societies should assemble, were to be subjected to a fine. Another part of the bill went to provide a remedy for an evil which had lately been felt to a great extent.—Debating Societies had become very frequent, and were so conducted, that they had an evident tendency to undermine the morals of the people. Some time before, lectures of the most seditious tendency had been publicly delivered; and, when a law had been passed to prohibit them, they only changed their form, by assuming the title of historical lectures, but, in reality, remained substantially the same. Discussions of this nature, Mr. Pitt truly remarked, in such hands as they were entrusted to, and with the audience to whom they were addressed, were employed to attack all religion, government, and society; and though in the outset they might not so directly lead to the consequences which it was the object of the conspirators in this country to attain, they ultimately tended, like the writings of the French philosophists, to prepare the minds of men for those horrors and calamities which were the infallible consequences of the principles now afloat in the world. To prevent such dangerous abuses, it was a part of the proposed measure to extend the provisions against seditious lectures and political discussions, to all places where money was taken at the door, making that the criterion, and putting them upon the footing of disorderly houses, unless where a license had been previously taken out, and where they were subject to the inspection of a magistrate. By this regulation no innocent pursuit or amusement would be obstructed, and the public would be protected from an evil of serious magnitude.

Another part of the plan for infusing poison into the public mind, it was the object of this bill to provide against. It had been the proud and distinguishing principle of the law of England, to cherish the liberty of the press, as the most powerful bulwark of civil liberty. It certainly was one, from the proper use of which the greatest advantages had been derived, but from the perversion and abuse of which the greatest mischiefs had ensued. It had, therefore, been the object of the law of this country,

without imposing any previous restraint, to secure a subsequent responsibility in the author and publisher, if they should be guilty of private libels, or of public treason.

From the laws already existing, and the general spirit of loyalty in the great mass of the community, libels of any magnitude were not likely to escape punishment. Indeed, though formerly so prevalent, they were, at this time, much restrained by the vigilance and vigour displayed by writers whose efforts were honourably directed to the propagation of sound principles. Unfortunately, however, the liberty of the Press had been abused, in a way most calculated to pervert and mislead the lower class of people. Instead of being employed to communicate knowledge and instruction, it had been perverted to give false and imperfect representations of facts, and inadequate or improper discussions of subjects, in no wise adapted to those to whom they were addressed, and fitted to produce the greatest mischief to them, and, ultimately, to the public itself. Hence had been prosecuted, to such an extent, the plan of disseminating hand-bills, tending to poison the minds of the people, to deprave their morals, to pervert their loyalty, and to undermine their religion. Against this novel species of mischief, some new provisions were necessary, the object of which would be always to have a responsible author or publisher. Such a regulation was strictly in the spirit of the constitution. If, in its application, it was new, it was because the evil was likewise new, while the remedy was so unexceptionable in its nature, that it must secure the approbation of all who valued public morals and public tranquillity. It was proposed, therefore, to have the name of the publisher affixed to every hand-bill, as to every other species of publication; and to have every press registered. Such a regulation, Mr. Pitt contended, would not injure the cause of science, literature, and improvement, or even interference with any innocent amusement, while it would secure the public against the circulation of anonymous treason, sedition, or impiety, by which, in the quarters most exposed, the pillars of morality, religion, and government, were attacked. Bills to accomplish these salutary objects were prepared, and passed into laws, in the course of the session.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Irish affairs—State of Ireland, from her first connection with England to the rebellion of 1798—Efforts of the Catholics to produce a separation of the two countries—The Catholic Priests exhort their flocks, previous to the rebellion in 1641, not to give their votes to Protestant candidates—Imperfect state of the representation in Ireland—Abuse of the elective franchise by the Catholics—Their conduct, the natural result of their religious principles—An union of Great Britain and Ireland projected by Mr. Pitt—The King's message to Parliament, on the subject—Debate on the message—Address moved by Mr. Dundas—Opposed by Mr. Sheridan—He ascribes the evils prevalent in Ireland to the ignorance and poverty of the people—Denies the competency of Parliament to conclude an union—Moves an amendment—Address supported by Mr. Canning—Mr. Pitt's speech—Censures Mr. Sheridan's doctrine as leading to jacobinism—Asserts the competence of Parliament—Contrasts the former statements of Opposition, relative to the defects in the Irish Constitution, with their present eulogies on the same system—Shews the settlement of 1782 not to have been *final*—Displays the advantages of an union to both countries—Proves its necessity, from the evils arising from the present state of parties in Ireland—Instances the case of the Regency, to prove that a difference on points of primary importance might subsist between the two separate Parliaments—Mr. Sheridan's amendment rejected, and the address adopted—Public discussions of the same subject in Ireland—Great ferment occasioned by it in that country—Tract in favour of the Union, by Mr. Edward Cooke—Meeting of the Irish Bar—They decide against the Union—Resolution of the Corporation of Dublin against the Union—The bankers and merchants of Dublin pass similar resolutions—Meeting of the Irish Parliament—The Viceroy's speech—Address carried in the House of Lords without a division—Majority of *one* only in favour of the address in the Commons—Lord Castlereagh condemns the rejection of the plan without examination—The address rejected, on the report, by a majority of five—The members who voted with the minister are insulted by the populace—Mr. Pitt unfolds his plan of an Union to the British House of Commons—Expresses a hope that the measure will be ultimately carried—Takes a comprehensive view of the question in all its bearings—Supports his own sentiments by those of Mr. Foster, on the question of the commercial propositions—Proves Mr. Foster's former opinion to be directly opposite to his present opinion—Considers the measure as necessary for the security of Ireland—Takes a view of the religious disputes in Ireland—Considers all questions relating to the Catholic claims as more likely to be impartially discussed in an united, than in a separate, legislature—Remark upon Mr. Pitt's notion respecting tithes in Ireland—Commercial benefits to be derived by Ireland from the Union—Ireland indebted to the liberality of the British Parliament for her present advantages in trade—Mr. Pitt confutes the objections of Mr. Sheridan and others, who oppose the Union—Exposes the folly and dangerous tendency of the asserted principle of the sovereignty of the

people—Shews the independence of Ireland not to be affected by the Union—Adduces the instance of the advantages resulting to the Scotch from their Union with England, in proof of the benefits to be expected from a similar measure by Ireland—Proposes eight resolutions, as the ground-work of an Union—Mr. Sheridan opposes them—He compliments Mr. Pitt as an orator, but condemns him as a statesman—Moves an amendment, which is rejected by 140 votes against 15—Resumed debate on the question—The Union opposed by Mr. St. John—Mr. Grey's speech in opposition to it—Is answered by Mr. Dundas—Mr. Sheridan asserts that, if a sovereignty does not rest in the people, the House of Brunswick are usurpers—Adduces the revolution of 1688 in support of his position—The revolution proved to afford no sanction to such a principle—No appeal was made to the people on that occasion—Mr. Sheridan's own authority quoted to prove that the revolution was effected in contradiction to the sentiments of a majority of the people—Mr. Windham corrects a gross mistake on the part of Mr. Sheridan—He ridicules the preposterous notion of the sovereignty of the people—Reflections on that subject—The House of Lords concur in the resolutions of the Commons—They are carried up to the Throne—Curious specimen of British philanthropy—Resolutions transmitted to Ireland—Irish Parliament prorogued—Renewal of the discussions on the Union in 1800—The Catholics of Dublin pass resolutions against the Union—The Irish Parliament meet—Motion of Sir Lawrence Parsons, deprecating an Union, rejected by a majority of forty-two—Message from the Viceroy, recommending an Union to the consideration of Parliament—Lord Castlereagh's speech in support of the measure—Proposes a compensation for the loss of Parliamentary interest—Thoughts on the subject—Contends that nothing but an Union can establish the security of the Protestant Church in Ireland—Remarks on the effect of the Union on the question of Catholic emancipation—Mistatement respecting the relative numbers of Protestants and Romanists corrected—No pledge nor promise made by Mr. Pitt, or by his authority, to support the Catholic claims—The whole of the British Cabinet of that day appealed to in support of this fact—The Union most violently opposed by Mr. Grattan—He devotes the British minister to "an *immortality* of *eternal* infamy"—His speech aptly characterized by an absentee—Specimen of Mr. George Ponsonby's eloquence—He pronounces the House of Commons to be mad, and expresses his fears of being bitten—Sir John Parnell moves an address to the King, to dissolve the Parliament—The motion rejected by the House—Decision in favour of an Union carried by 158 votes against 115—The Irish House of Commons defended from the charge of inconsistency on this question—Debates on the same subject, in the Irish House of Lords—Lord Clare's speech—The Union voted by a large majority—The King's message to the British Parliament, communicating the Irish resolutions—Debates on the question—Mr. Pitt's speech—Explains his sentiments on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, and his reasons for the change which had taken place in his opinions on that question—Moves an address to the King—Mr. Grey opposes the address—Mr. Pitt's reply—The address carried in both Houses, and the Union finally determined.

THE unsettled state of Ireland had long occupied the most serious attention of Mr. Pitt, every effort of whose comprehensive mind was directed to the discovery of some adequate means for composing the troubles which had so long distracted that unhappy country, for

removing the evils which seemed to frustrate the benevolent intentions of nature, and for rendering her a sound and wholesome member of the British empire. Indeed, the necessity of such an alteration as would afford, at least, a fair probability of producing this beneficial effect, had long been obvious. Whoever had attended to the situation of Ireland from the first period of her connection with England, to the rebellion of 1798,—whoever had examined her history during that period, could not refuse to acknowledge this truth. Not only the tranquillity and prosperity of Ireland herself, but the grand object of consolidating the strength of the empire, pointed out the wisdom and expediency of such a change. In the infancy of this connection, the native Irish harboured the most implacable hatred against the English colonists, whom they considered as their conquerors and their oppressors; and though, at different times, they submitted themselves to the British Monarchs, and swore fealty and allegiance to them, they never failed to embrace every favourable opportunity for throwing off their yoke, and for expelling the English from their country. The pride of independence rendered the Irish insensible to the advantages of a connection with a wise and civilized nation; while their barbarous mode of life, and that indulgence in licentiousness of every kind, which their municipal laws not only tolerated but encouraged, made them extremely averse from those salutary restrainsts which the more sober discipline of English domination imposed.

After the Reformation, this enmity was considerably heightened by religious rancour, and the Irish had, on various occasions, recourse to the Pope, and to the Kings of France and Spain, to enable them to effect, what they could not hope to achieve without foreign assistance, the expulsion of the English, and the separation of their native country from Great Britain. In the reign of Elizabeth, the natives of Irish and of English blood, between whom a violent antipathy had previously existed, first began to unite, and to coalesce under the banners of religion;* and this coalition was completely effected in the reign of our

* Fynes Morrison, who was Secretary to Lord Mountjoy, said, that the Lords of the Pale, all of English blood, were wavering; and the Earl of Desmond and his relations were all attainted for rebellion.

first Charles, when it appeared that all the Catholics,* both of English and Irish descent, joined in the dreadful rebellion of 1641, the object of which was to separate Ireland from England, and to extirpate the Protestants. The same hostile disposition was manifested in the two subsequent reigns; and it is a lamentable fact, which speaks more than a volume of comments, that the only period of real tranquillity in Ireland, for the greater part of three centuries, was that during which the penal laws were in force, which laws were not enacted till after the revolution.

It has been observed, by one of the most able and intelligent of our historians, "that the religious spirit, when it mingles with faction, contains in it something supernatural and unaccountable, and that, in its operation on society, effects correspond less to their known causes, than is found in any other circumstances of government." The truth of this observation has been fully established by the example of every country in which religious feuds have prevailed, and by none more strongly than by that of Ireland. We are told by Lord Strafford, in his State Letters on Ireland, during his Viceroyalty, that the Romish Priests and the Jesuists, in order to prevent the return of Protestant members to Parliament, previous to the rebellion of 1641, charged their flocks, at their chapels, not to give their votes to any person of that persuasion, under pain of excommunication; and, on the explosion of the rebellion, one and forty Papists were expelled from the House of Commons for having been engaged in it; and a resolution was then entered into, that no man should sit in that House who did not take the oath of supremacy. † During the short period that the Irish Papists were in possession of political power, after the abdication of James the Second, it was their constant object to effect a total excision of the Protestants, and to

* Hugh Oge Macmahon, one of the leading conspirators, who was apprehended in Dublin, on the night of the twenty-second of October, confessed,—"That all the lords and gentlemen in the kingdom that were Papists were engaged in the plot, and that all the Protestants were to be killed that night." His evidence was confirmed by that of many other rebels.

† Commons' Journals. Vol. I. pp. 293, 294.

render Ireland wholly independent of England. What the state of Ireland was, subject to this period, previous to, and after, the repeal of the restrictive laws, has been already shewn. Whenever disaffection reared its head, separation from England was its prominent and unvarying object. It was, therefore, natural to suppose, that a consolidation of the two kingdoms, upon the same principle which had influenced, and regulated the union of England and Scotland, at the commencement of the century, would supply the best remedy to this glaring and growing evil. There were other circumstances besides those which have been already stated, circumstances connected with the internal polity of Ireland, and, more immediately, with the Constitution of Parliament, which dictated the necessity of such a measure. A great portion of the Members of the House of Commons were under the immediate influence and direction of certain political leaders, in either House, without whose co-operation the ordinary business of the State could not be carried on. Hence the Government was, in a manner, dependent on this aristocratical party for its political existence. And when any of these great leaders abandoned the cause of Government, and opposed its measures, infinite confusion ensued. Such dependence of the Government on the heads of a party was highly pernicious in another point of view, for it compelled Ministers to yield implicitly to their demands, however unreasonable, and however exorbitant; to create places, and to grant pensions to their needy and hungry followers. The seats, in many close boroughs, were regularly sold, and, in some others, artful and factious adventurers, who regarded a seat in Parliament solely as the means of exchanging poverty and obscurity for wealth and celebrity, were returned; and these uniformly endeavoured, by seditious speeches, and popular harangues, to inflame the Popish multitude, already rendered disaffected by religious prejudice.

After the Romanists obtained, from the most inconsistent and shameless Parliament, which ever disgraced a country, the elective franchise, they united, as it was natural to suppose they would, in one compact body, under the guidance of their clergy, and resolved not to give their votes to any persons who would not enter into a solemn engagement to support their claims in Parliament, and to promote their interests upon

all occasions.—The Catholic body, thus associated, and strengthened by the accession of many powerful Protestant auxiliaries, hoped, in process of time, to be enabled to gain an ascendancy, by the subversion of the Established Church; and their intemperate zeal, flowing from fanaticism, produced an extraordinary degree of feverish turbulence.

Such conduct, on the part of the Romanists, after the ample concessions which they had received from the State, and the full degree of civil liberty which they now enjoyed, could surprize those only who were ignorant of the force of religious prejudice, and of the natural operations of the human mind. Independent of the peculiar policy of their church, which renders the promotion of her interests a primary consideration with all her followers, the conviction which, we must suppose, they possessed of the superior purity of their own faith, the doctrine of exclusive salvation which that faith inculcates, and the spirit of conversion which has, at all times, and in all countries, distinguished its professors; all combined to supply the most powerful motives which could stimulate the mind of man, particularly when unenlightened and uninformed, to use every exertion for the extirpation of that damnable heresy which they considered as destructive of the souls of all who cherished it, and for the complete triumph of that church which they regarded, not merely as the only true church, but as the only possible road to salvation. Whoever thought well of the Romanists, whoever believed that they were upright and honest, acting in all they did, upon principle, must also believe that they would do every thing which their principles taught them was right and proper to be done; and, consequently, that, in seeking to overturn the Established Church, and to raise their own on its ruins, they only asserted a right, and discharged a duty. If any mischief to the State, then, arose from their efforts to attain their object, the fault lay with that Parliament which had entrusted to their hands the political power, which their prejudices made them think it proper to exercise for the destruction of the established institutions of the country.

With a constituent body thus divided into two parties, which must be in a constant state of collision from the heat which religious divisions

engender, and with an opposition in Parliament, well-skilled, and better disposed, to inflame their passions and prejudices, and to exasperate them against each other, Ireland, it was evident, would be perpetually subject to internal convulsions, and her government harassed by incessant rebellions.

Mr. Pitt had long revolved in his mind all the circumstances of this momentous case; and it was not without great deliberation, nor without justly estimating the force of all the obstacles which he had to encounter, and of all the advantages which he hoped to obtain, that he finally resolved on attempting to produce an incorporate union of the two countries, as the best remedy, of which the nature of the case would admit, for the calamities which resulted from the present imperfect system. Having previously arranged all the materials of his plan, a message from the King to the House of Commons, was delivered on the twenty-second of January, in the year 1799, in which his Majesty told the House, that he was persuaded that the unremitting industry with which our enemies persevered in their avowed design of effecting the separation of Ireland from this kingdom, could not fail to engage the particular attention of Parliament; and he recommended it to the House to consider of the most effectual means of counteracting and finally defeating that design; and he trusted that a review of all the circumstances which had recently occurred, (joined to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interests) would dispose the Parliaments of both kingdoms to provide, in the manner which they judged most expedient, for settling such complete and final adjustment as might best tend to improve and perpetuate a connection essential for their common security, and to augment and consolidate the strength, power, and resources, of the British empire.

This message was taken into consideration the day after it was delivered, (January 23d) when Mr. Dundas, having laid on the table of the House, various papers containing an account of the proceedings of certain societies in Ireland, and relative to the rebellion in that country, moved an address to his Majesty, pledging the House to proceed, with all due dispatch, to the consideration of the several interests recom-

mended in the message to their most serious attention. No sooner was the address moved, than Mr. Sheridan rose to deprecate the measure of an union, as destructive of the independence of Ireland; as inadequate to prevent a separation of the two kingdoms; and as ill calculated to remove the evils complained of. The disaffection to the King's government in Ireland, Mr. Sheridan ascribed solely to the ignorance and poverty of the people, and these he imputed to the "exactions and imposts of their overgrown landlords." That ignorance and poverty prevailed to a very great extent was, unhappily, but too true; and that they arose, in a great measure, from the mode of underletting lands, and from the absence of the great proprietors of land from the country, is equally certain. But it was surprizing, after recent occurrences, that Mr. Sheridan should have totally overlooked one grand and prominent cause of disaffection,—religious prejudice, and the rancour which flowed from it. Indeed, it is possible he might mean to include this under the head of *ignorance*, which might fairly be considered as its parent. He contended that the causes of these evils should be removed before an union should be proposed; and he insisted, that the free opinions of the people of Ireland could not be collected, while there was an English army in the country. He moved an amendment to the address, beseeching his Majesty not to listen to the councils of those who should advise or promote the measure of an union, at the present crisis, and under the present circumstances of the empire. After some judicious observations on Mr. Sheridan's speech by Mr. Canning, Mr. Pitt remarked, that the address would pledge the House to nothing more than to take into their consideration the subject recommended to their care by the King, and which was highly interesting to the welfare of the country. Mr. Sheridan, indeed, wished to preclude all consideration of the subject, and had boldly asserted, that the House possessed no legitimate power to render their deliberations effectual. In contradiction to the extraordinary position thus laid down, Mr. Pitt maintained, that the Parliaments of the two countries had full right and power to consent to an union if they thought it adviseable. If the Parliament of Ireland had no just power, or legitimate authority, without the immediate instructions, not of its constituents merely, but of the people of Ireland in the mass, to determine upon this subject, as little had the Parliament

of England such authority, as little had the Parliament of Scotland that authority, as little had the Parliaments of England and Scotland that authority, when they agreed upon the union between the two kingdoms; an union, under which the prosperity of both had grown up and flourished; under which the laws of both had been improved; under which had been cherished a principle of cordial co-operation, which had led to the happiness of Great Britain, and had rendered it the envy, and, he trusted, would make it the protection, of surrounding nations. "You sit in that chair, Sir;" said Mr. Pitt, "I stand here before you; the honourable gentleman himself addressed you this night; called upon this House to entertain a debate, without any right whatever; we are all totally destitute of legitimate authority, if the honourable gentleman is right in the principle he contended for to-night, on this part of the subject. Indeed, if he be right in that principle, you have no Parliament in England, possessed of legal and just authority at this hour; there is no act which you have performed for the last ninety years, however well intended, or however effectual for the happiness of the people of Great Britain, that can be said to be legitimate or legal."

Mr. Pitt declared he knew not what ideas Mr. Sheridan might entertain, or what aid he expected, or what countenance he would find ready to be given to his doctrine, that "Parliament is not competent to the discussion of this subject." He knew it led immediately to the system of universal right of suffrage in the people; to the doctrine, that each man should have an actual share in the government of the country, by having a choice for his representative; and then went back to the whole system of jacobinism, which, he thought, had been pretty nearly exploded as soon as it came to be pretty well understood all over Europe. If Mr. Sheridan admitted this, then, and not till then, would his argument upon this head of the subject be intelligible and consistent; for, without this, the whole of what he had said upon the matter would be quite obscure, if not altogether without a meaning. If the competence of Parliament, which fully and freely represented all the people of this country, (and here Mr. Pitt remarked that he was using no language of his own, but was following the approved language of our ancestors)

were denied, there was an end to all the authority of the House, not on that point only, but on every other point.

It was deemed unnecessary, by Mr. Pitt, in this stage of the proceeding, to enter into any detail of the proposed plan, which would be, more properly, reserved for a future opportunity, when specific propositions would be submitted to the House. He, therefore, confined himself, at present, to an answer to Mr. Sheridan's speech, and to an avowal of his sentiments on many points to which the various topics introduced in that speech directly or indirectly referred; and in doing this, he, of necessity, endeavoured to remove many false impressions which had gone forth on the subject, particularly in Ireland, where it had undergone a long and warm discussion, in innumerable pamphlets to which it had given birth. Mr. Pitt observed, that, however desirable an union might be, and he was convinced that it was, yet he knew it had, and must have, its difficulties. He knew it was, of necessity, liable to a thousand difficulties, because it was subject to a thousand prejudices, and partial objections; to sentiments hastily conceived by some, and eagerly adopted by others; to local and confined views, to personal affections, and to a multitude of impediments, which, however firm their own opinions might be of the indispensable necessity of the measure, yet had induced his Majesty's Ministers not to enter upon the detail at that moment.

Referring to the course of proceedings now intended to be adopted, he said that, after a message came from the Throne, recommending, in substance, an union between the two kingdoms, nothing in the first instance was proposed but a general address, pledging the House to nothing more than to take the subject into serious consideration; and a day was stated on which the outline of the plan would be submitted to Parliament. Such was the grand principle of the proceeding, to which Mr. Pitt had supposed not the smallest objection could be urged. The question then, was, whether the subject was worthy of their deliberation or not. Mr. Sheridan had contended for the negative, in which case he was bound to prove, either that the actual state of Ireland was such as to require no remedy whatever, or that, if it did require a remedy, a

better might be proposed than any which had an union for its basis; or that an union, at all events, must be such an evil that the House ought not to entertain the thought of it for a moment. Mr. Sheridan, however, had adduced no arguments in support of such an opinion: for many years past nothing had been heard from him and his friends but complaints and lamentations. They had been in the constant habit of declaiming, sometimes upon the unjust and cruel, at other times upon the inefficient and defective, system by which Ireland had been governed, not only in the executive, but also by the deliberative, powers of the country. The House had often been reminded of the unfortunate distraction of all its parts of government, and of the evils which had resulted from the whole collectively; nay, they had been told, and that pretty confidently, by Mr. Fox, that the system by which Ireland was governed was radically defective; that, indeed, it was so full of deformity in its very constitution, as that, if we wished to answer the cavils of those who disputed the beauty of the Constitution of Great Britain, we could not do better than desire them to look at her sister, who was so ugly, that, when she was beheld, all objections against the other would vanish. Mr. Sheridan was asked, how he had forgotten these things, and how it happened that he now saw none of these deformities? How he came all at once, to be satisfied that this was an unjust picture of Ireland; that Ireland was as secure as she could be, and that her government wanted no remedy? Mr. Pitt had seen the Parliament of Ireland do much that deserved praise, but he had not seen enough to enable him to prove, that the happiness of that country was perfectly secure; he had not seen enough to prove, that there had not lately been there a desperate rebellion; he had not seen enough to prove, that the House should conclude that the safety of that part of the British empire was free from danger; he had not seen enough to prove, that there did not, at that hour, exist in Ireland evils which all must deplore, and which they had much more reason to deplore than they had to deplore those which Mr. Sheridan and his friends had so repeatedly, and so vehemently, pressed upon the attention of the House. "I say," pursued Mr. Pitt, "that Ireland is subject to great and deplorable evils, which have a deep root, for they lie in the situation of the country itself; in the present character, manners, and habits, of its people; in

their want of intelligence, or, in other words, their ignorance; in the unavoidable separation between certain classes; in the state of property; in its religious distinctions; in the rancour which bigotry engenders, and which superstition rears and cherishes."

Mr. Sheridan had told the House, that these were evils which could not be cured in a moment. Mr. Pitt knew they could not, but the question was, whether it would not be wise and prudent to adopt some plan by which that cure might be effected in the course of time? If, indeed, it could have been produced by what Mr. Sheridan, and his political associates, had often recommended to the House, by what they called a Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, the task would have been much easier than, in truth, it was now found to be; but Catholic Emancipation, and Parliamentary Reform, were pretexts used by some to cover designs of a very different nature. If such an object could be kept in view, and could be attained by calm, dispassionate, sober, investigation, no man would be readier than himself, Mr. Pitt declared, to assent to any measure for that purpose.—But if the state of society were such, that laws, however wise in themselves, would be ineffectual as to their object, until the manners and customs of the people were altered; if men were in a state of poverty in which it was impossible they could have any comfort; if the progress of civilization depended, in a great measure, upon the distribution of wealth; if the improvement of that wealth depended very much upon the improvement of capital; if all the advantages to be derived from an increase of national wealth depended much upon the temper of the inhabitants; if these advantages, together with the still greater advantage of mental improvement, were all retarded by the distractions and divisions of party, by the blind zeal and phrenzy of religious prejudices, by old and furious family feuds;—if all these circumstances and objects combined to make a country wretched, what was the remedy? An impartial Legislature, standing aloof from local party connection, sufficiently removed from the scene of contending factions, to be the advocate or the champion of neither; being so placed as to have no superstitious reverence for the names and prejudices of ancient families, who had so long enjoyed the exclusive monopoly of certain public patronage and

property, which custom had sanctioned, and which modern necessity might justify; a Legislature which would neither give way to the haughty pretensions of a few, nor open the door to popular inroads, to clamour, or to invasion of all sacred forms and regularities, under the false and imposing colours of philosophical improvement in the art of government. This was the thing which was wanted for Ireland. Where was it to be found? In that country, where the evils which had been enumerated existed, or in this? In other words, where was that Legislature to deliberate? In a place where the utmost effort of what was called Patriotism, amounted to nothing more than an aim at temporary popularity, as was evident from what had happened; or in a place where the discussion was calm and temperate? Certainly the latter; that is, in England. To neglect to establish such a Legislature, when the calls for its establishment were so numerous, so potent, and so imperative, and when it was possible to establish it, was an imprudence, in the mind of Mr. Pitt, which nothing could justify.—"I say also," added he, "that much of the evil which Ireland now labours under arises, unavoidably, from the condition of the Parliament of that country."

Mr. Pitt observed, that one of the defects to which he had adverted—the want of introduction of capital into Ireland,—could only be removed by connection and intercourse with Great Britain, which would improve the temper and manners, as well as the understandings of the people of Ireland; and by a Parliament which should entertain no jealousies arising from local prejudices; and this could only be the case when a Parliament should deliberate in England, and that, too, upon the interest of both countries united. It was upon that, and upon that only, the happiness of the people of Ireland depended. In answer to an objection which had been founded, to the present measure, on the ground that the regulations of 1782 were considered as a *final* adjustment, it was remarked by Mr. Pitt, that that adjustment finally settled the independence of the Irish Legislature; but he reminded the House, that a resolution had been then entered into by the Irish Parliament, declaring, in substance, that the interests of Great Britain and Ireland were inseparable, that the connection ought to be founded on a solid and permanent basis, and that Ireland would adopt such measures as should be consistent with its own

internal tranquillity, and as might be connected with the strength and stability of the whole of the British Empire. Here, then, was a proof upon record, that something was left to be done after the Legislature of Ireland had gained its independence. This resolution was carried to the Throne, but nothing had yet been done in consequence of it. It was now proposed, not that Ireland should have some benefits, as part of the British Empire, but that she should be allowed to participate in all the blessings which England enjoyed.

For one hundred years England had pursued a very narrow policy with regard to Ireland. She had manifested a very absurd jealousy concerning the growth, produce, and manufacture of several articles, which would be done away by the plan now in contemplation. When there existed two independent Parliaments in one Empire, there could be no security for the continuance of their harmony and cordial co-operation. Every genuine patriot of both countries assented to the general proposition, that England and Ireland should stand or fall—should live and die, together; and yet, without an Union, there could be no security for the continuance of that sentiment. The happiness of both countries ought to be perpetual; but, as matters stood now, it was liable to a thousand accidents; it depended upon the violence of the moment; it might be governed, upon views of temporary popularity, or upon the personal convenience of a few individuals; a tenure by which no nation should hold its happiness.

These positions were not hastily advanced, but had a reference to the conduct of two champions of parties in the two countries, Mr. Grattan, who, Mr. Pitt said, had a large pecuniary reward for his labours; and Mr. Fox, who was the subject of great panegyric in England and in Ireland. These champions were satisfied when the Irish legislature was declared independent of the English. The former had, what was supposed to be, sovereign power; it had the power of dictating to the Executive authority, upon the questions of war and peace, in the same controlling manner as the Parliament of this country had;—but what security was there that they would both agree on all questions thereafter, in which the general interests of the British empire should be involved?

Was it a difficult thing to suppose a case in which they might clash, and become, perhaps, as hostile to one another as any two independent bodies politic in Europe? Mr. Pitt had no difficulty in saying, that such a case might possibly happen, nor did he think that much was gained, by the declaration of the independence of the Irish Parliament, or ever would be gained, by the British empire, until there should be some security that both legislatures would go on harmoniously together, upon all questions in which the general interests of the British empire were involved. Neither did he much admire the philosophy of that person who thought he had completed a beautiful new fabric when he had only perfected the destruction of an old one, who called that destruction, "the most stupendous pile of human wisdom that ever was exhibited to the world."—When he found such a man, after the act was passed, which declared the independence of the Irish Parliament, assenting to the principle of the resolution of a committee, stating that the connection between the two countries should be established by mutual consent on a solid and permanent basis, and when he found that such a resolution was carried to the Throne, as had been already observed, and when he reflected that nothing was afterwards done towards carrying that resolution into effect, he had the authority of that person and his friends, for saying, that what was done in declaring the Parliament of Ireland independent, was defective in a point which was indispensable for the happiness of the people of Ireland, and, indeed, of both countries. Mr. Pitt asserted then, that the *onus* lay upon those who opposed the Union, to shew its bad tendency, rather than upon Ministers to shew its probable good effect, for their own conduct proclaimed the absolute necessity of something being done; it was incumbent upon all those who took a part in the discussion upon that subject, and who approved the measure—*the childish measure of the independence of the Parliament of Ireland!* without any security that the two Parliaments should never differ essentially upon any point in which the happiness of the whole empire might be involved, to shew it; and upon Mr. Sheridan, as much as upon any one, for he took an active share in the parliamentary proceedings to which he had alluded.

How stood the case in point of *experience?* Was there a probability, or was there not, that the Parliaments of the two countries might differ

upon a point essentially interesting to the British empire? The House had a guide upon that subject. They might profit by experience. "I mean," said Mr. Pitt, "by the case of the regency." Mr. Sheridan had observed, that there was no difference between the two Parliaments, as to the Regent. There was, indeed, no difference as to the *person*; but there was an essential difference as to the *principle*; the Irish Parliament decided on one principle, the English Parliament on another, and their agreement, as to the person, was accidental;—and, upon the distinct principles on which the two Parliaments proceeded, they might as well have differed upon the person who was to be Regent, as on the powers to be granted to him. Could any man say, that this was not an instance of an essential difference upon a point essential to the welfare of the British empire? or, could any man shew what security there was, that an essential difference upon some other object might not thereafter occur between the two Parliaments? That they had not hitherto differed in the great and momentous events which had been agitated before Parliament, was a good fortune which had arisen from one general cause, that of all descriptions of persons having united against one common enemy, with the exception only of a few, whose counsels, happily for both countries, and for the civilized part of the world, had lost all their influence. Would it be contended, that such difference, as occurred at the time of the regency, would never occur again? Would it be asserted, that when we come to treat for peace, for instance, or to consider any subject of alliance with a foreign power, or to move any question of trade or commerce, that then the local prejudices (which had great influence) might not occasion a difference between the two legislatures, upon points that might be essential to the welfare of both kingdoms? No matter what the cause of difference was; it was enough that such a difference might exist. A party in England might give the Throne one kind of advice, by its Parliament; a party in Ireland might give directly opposite advice, upon the most essential points of public welfare, upon a foreign alliance, upon the army, upon the navy, upon any branch of the public service, upon trade, upon commerce, or upon any point that might affect the prosperity of the empire at large. What would have been the consequence to both England and Ireland, had the dissensions in the latter country been the same, in point of force, against the Executive government in Parliament, since the commencement of the present

war, as they were at the time when the Irish propositions were rejected? Had those men, who were at the head of the Opposition, in either country, possessed the confidence of any considerable part of the public, would it be maintained, that any Minister would have been able to save Great Britain or Ireland from destruction? But, happily for us, happily for every part of the civilized world, the iniquity of the common enemy had produced a general Union; else all the evils which had been already stated, together with the poison of jacobinism, would have come upon us, and such a complication would have soon completed the ruin of our Empire; but, fortunately, the counsels of those who favoured such principles were rejected with disdain, by the good sense of mankind at large. When, however, the cement by which the two legislatures had been held together should lose its efficacy, no security would remain for the continuance of their cordial co-operation; for the present state of society in Ireland, as well as its representation, which partook of its nature, was radically defective.

Mr. Pitt apologized for the length of his remarks in the present stage of the business. He had thought a great deal upon the subject; and what he had said was nothing but the result of his own observations.—He was bound to convey to the House every information which it was in his power to give; but, however acceptable, or otherwise, his sentiments might be to either party in this country, or to those whom he respected on the other side the water, his duty compelled him to speak them freely. He saw the case so plainly, and he felt it so strongly, that there was no circumstance of apparent or probable difficulty, no apprehension of popularity, no fear of toil or labour, which should prevent him from using every exertion which remained in his power to accomplish this great work, on which, he was persuaded, depended the internal tranquillity of Ireland, the interest of the British empire at large, and, he hoped he might add, the happiness of a great part of the habitable world. Mr. Sheridan's amendment was negatived, and the address carried, without a division.

Previous to the introduction of this subject into the British Parliament, it had undergone a great deal of discussion in Ireland. In order to sound

the public opinion on the important question of an Union, in Ireland, a gentleman, holding a public situation there,* published a pamphlet, in the winter of 1798, entitled, "*Arguments for and against an Union between Great Britain and Ireland considered.*" It was circulated by the government, with great industry, in every part of the sister kingdom, where it excited considerable alarm; and gave rise to a controversy, which, as might be expected, was carried on with great warmth, and no small bitterness of invective. Indeed, for some weeks, both the press and the public attention in Ireland, were engrossed by the subject.

The bar were among the foremost to take the alarm, and indeed they were induced to exert themselves in the business, by more motives than a mere *amor patriæ*, a bare impulse of patriotism.† On the 9th of December they had a meeting in Dublin, when Mr. Saurin moved, "That the measure of a legislative union of this kingdom and Great Britain is an innovation, which it would be highly dangerous and improper to propose, at the present juncture, to this country." A long debate, *of course*, ensued, where every member was an orator, and a division took place on a motion of adjournment, which was supported

* Mr. Edward Cooke, who was then under secretary at the Castle.

† In Mr. Cooke's tract it had been observed,—"The chief opposition to the measure must be expected from the bar, who are supposed to be more personally interested against it, than any class in society. It is a general habit in the gentlemen of Ireland, to educate their sons at the Temple, and the number of barristers is much greater, in proportion, here than in England. And as the profession will not support, by any means, the numbers which pursue it, lawyers, in Ireland, extend their circle to politics, and are very numerous in Parliament, and extremely active in the business of it. In England, there are few lawyers in the House of Commons,* whereas, in Ireland they are a formidable phalanx. Were a legislative union to take place, Irish lawyers would be deprived of the parliamentary market for their abilities and ambition; they could not attend the British Parliament without renouncing business; they would be entirely confined to professional prospects; and mere political emolument and situations would be taken from their grasp.—But the very reasons which make the bar oppose an union, are arguments in favour of it."

* This might be the case when Mr. Cooke wrote; but, at present, lawyers are nearly as numerous in the British, as they formerly were in the Irish, House of Commons.

only by thirty-two votes, in opposition to one hundred and sixty-six, who approved the original question.

Five days after this meeting the corporation of Dublin held a *post assembly*, at which it was resolved, "That, by the spirited exertions of the people and Parliament of Ireland, the trade and constitution thereof were settled on principles so liberal, that the nation had risen ever since rapidly in wealth and consequence. And that, having boldly defended the constitution in King, Lords, and Commons, against the open and secret abettors of rebellion, they were determined steadily to oppose any attempt that might be made to surrender the free legislation of that kingdom, by uniting with the legislature of Great Britain. The next day, at a numerous and respectable meeting of the bankers and merchants of Dublin, the Lord Mayor in the chair, resolutions of equal strength against the union were proposed and adopted. The alarm, in short, became general, and parochial meetings were convened to express disapprobation of a measure, which seemed to be an object of universal dread. The Fellows of Trinity College, and such of the students as were qualified to vote at elections, joined in a request to their representatives that they would oppose the union.

This opposition was naturally to be expected on a question peculiarly calculated to affect the passions and prejudices of many, and to rouze that laudable pride which the patriot feels in the dignity and honour of his country. It was a question, on which the most honest, upright, and enlightened men might reasonably differ without subjecting themselves to the imputation of improper motives. If an Irishman felt the independence of his country to be shaken, her rank in the scale of nations to be lowered, or her character to be injured, by an union with Great Britain, he had not only a right to oppose it, but it was his duty to exercise that right, if, after a patient and attentive examination of every argument in favour of the measure, he should find no reason to change his original opinion.

In the midst of the ferment thus excited, the Parliament of Ireland met, on the 22d of Jan. 1799. The Viceroy, in his speech, observed,

that a spirit of disaffection still prevailed in many parts of Ireland; that the agents of the enemy were active in raising an expectation of fresh assistance from France, for the purpose of separating that kingdom from Great Britain, which must have engaged their particular attention; and that his Majesty had commanded him to express his anxious hope, that this consideration, joined to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interest, would dispose the Parliaments in both kingdoms to provide the most effectual means of maintaining and improving the connection essential to their common security, and of consolidating, as far as possible, into one firm and lasting fabric, the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire.

The address was moved by the Earl of Glandore, who took a brief view of the advantages which would result from an union of the two countries, and earnestly recommending the adoption of that measure; and an amendment, moved by Lord Powerscourt, in which the recommendation was omitted, was negatived without a division. In the House of Commons, however, the ministerial project experienced a different reception. The address was there moved by Lord Tyrone, and the amendment, having the same object as that moved in the Lords, was rejected only by one solitary voice. This trifling majority was justly considered, by the enemies to the union, as a victory gained over its friends, and, as such, it was celebrated in the metropolis, and its vicinity, with various demonstrations of joy. When the address was reported from the Committee appointed to prepare it, Sir Laurence Parsons moved, that the following words in the address, "That the House would take into their consideration the principle of consolidating, as far as possible, into one firm and lasting fabric, the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire," should be expunged. Upon this motion a long debate took place, which lasted till six in the morning, when it was carried by one hundred and nine votes, against one hundred and four. Lord Castlereagh then told the House that he had brought forward this measure in compliance with the duties of his station, and with no other view than the mutual advantages of both countries, and the general strength, welfare, and prosperity of the empire; however, those gentlemen who had thought proper to oppose

the measure, without so much as examining a tittle of its purport, or any of its arrangements, would recollect that, when the day should come when that House would feel the necessity of its adoption, upon their own heads would fall the responsibility for rejecting a measure of such high importance to the tranquillity and solid happiness of their country.

The exultation of the Anti-Unionists now rose to a very high pitch; the friends and advocates of the measure were not merely reviled in paragraphs and pamphlets, but were exposed to more practical insults, in their passage to and from the House. The Commons, after these discussions, adjourned their sittings to the 7th of February.

This defeat, however, did not deter Mr. Pitt from the execution of his intention to unfold the principle and object of his plan to Parliament, and to the public. Accordingly, on the day appointed for the further consideration of the question, in the British House of Commons, the last day of January, he opened the subject by expressing his disappointment at what had recently passed in the sister kingdom. He knew, and he acknowledged, that the Parliament of Ireland possessed the power, the entire competence, on the behalf of that country, alike to accept or reject a proposition of this nature. He saw that, at the present moment, one House of Parliament in Ireland had expressed a repugnance even to the consideration of the measure. And he expressed his deep regret that a plan, fraught with so many advantages, to Ireland in particular, should have been so received, before even its nature could be known. But, with his feelings on the subject, with his knowledge of the undoubted rights of the Irish legislature, he should never speak of its determination in any other terms but those of respect. But he felt, also, that, as a member of the British Parliament, he had a right to exercise, and a duty to perform. That duty was to express, as distinctly as he could, the general nature and outline of his plan, which, in his conscience, he thought would tend, in the strongest manner, to ensure the safety and the happiness of both kingdoms.

While he felt, therefore, that, so long as the House of Commons of

Ireland viewed the subject in the light they now viewed it, there was no chance for its adoption, he did not think that, on that account, he ought to abstain from submitting it to the consideration of the British Parliament; on the contrary, he deemed it the more necessary to explain distinctly the principles of the measure, and to state the grounds upon which it appeared to him to be entitled to the approbation of the legislature. If Parliament, upon a full knowledge of the plan, and upon a fair explanation of its nature and tendency, should be of opinion, with him, that it was founded upon fair, just, and equitable principles, calculated to produce mutual advantages to the two kingdoms, he should then propose, that their determination should remain recorded, as that by which the Parliament of Great Britain were ready to abide, leaving to the legislature of Ireland to reject or to adopt it thereafter, upon a full consideration of the subject.

There was no man who would deny, that, in a great question of this nature, involving in it objects which, in the first instance, were more likely to be decided upon by passion than by judgment, in a question in which an honest, but a mistaken, sense of national pride was so likely to operate, much misconstruction and misconception must inevitably happen. It therefore became the more necessary, that the intentions of the government which proposed the measure, and the principles of the measure itself, should be distinctly understood. But, in stating that intention, and those principles, Mr. Pitt professed to have something more in view than a mere vindication of government for having proposed the measure. He entertained a confidence, even under the apparent discouragement of the opinion expressed by the Irish House of Commons, that the measure was founded upon such clear, such demonstrable grounds of utility, was so well calculated to add to the strength and power of the empire, (in which the safety of Ireland was included, and from which it never could be separated) and was attended with so many advantages to Ireland in particular, that all that could be necessary for its ultimate adoption was, that it should be stated distinctly, temperately, and fully, and that it should be left to the unprejudiced, the dispassionate, and the sober, judgment of the Parliament of Ireland. He wished, that those whose interests were involved in the measure, should have time

for consideration; he wished that time should be given to the landed, to the mercantile, and to the manufacturing interest; that they should look at it in all its bearings, and that they should coolly examine, and sift the popular arguments by which it had been opposed, and that then they should give their deliberative and final judgment.

He was the more encouraged to hope for the ultimate success of the measure, when he saw, notwithstanding all the prejudices which it had excited, that barely more than one-half of the members of the House of Commons were adverse to it; and that, in the other House of Parliament in Ireland, containing, as it did, so large a proportion of the property of that kingdom, it was approved by a great majority. When he had reason to believe that the sentiments of a considerable portion of the people of that country were favourable to it, and that much of the manufacturing, and of the commercial, interest of Ireland were already sensible how much it was calculated to promote their advantage; he thought, when it came to be more deliberately examined, and when it was seen in what temper it was here proposed and discussed, that it would still terminate in that which could alone be a fortunate result. It would be vain, indeed, to hope, that a proposition on which prejudices were so likely to operate, and which was so liable to misconception, should be unanimously approved. But the approbation for which he hoped, was that of the Irish Parliament, and that of the intelligent part of the Irish public. It was with a view to that object that he thought it his duty to bring the measure forward at present; not for the sake of urging its immediate adoption, but that it might be known and recorded. It was not necessary for this purpose to enter into any thing more than such a general statement of the nature of the plan as would enable the House to form a correct judgment of it.

As to the general principle upon which the whole of the measure in contemplation was founded, Mr. Pitt was happy to observe, from what had recently passed, that there was not a probability of any difference of opinion. This principle, to which both sides of the House expressed their assent, was, that a perpetual connection between Great Britain and Ireland was essential to the interests of both. He did not wish merely for

the maintenance of that connection, as tending to add to the general strength of the empire, but he wished for the maintenance of it with a peculiar regard to the local interests of Ireland, with a regard to every thing that could give to Ireland its due weight and importance, as a great member of the empire. He wished for it with a view of giving to that country the means of improving all its great natural resources, and of giving it a full participation of all those blessings which this country so eminently enjoyed. The discussion of this subject was now called for by the attack which had been made by foreign enemies and domestic traitors on that very connection, the necessity of which had been admitted on all hands. The dissolution of that connection was the great object of the hostility of the common enemies of both countries; it was almost the only remaining hope with which they now continued the contest. Baffled and defeated, as they had hitherto been, they still retained the hope, they were still meditating attempts, to dissolve that connection. They had shewn that they thought this the vulnerable point in which England might be most successfully attacked; and it was our business to derive advantage from the hostility of our enemies; to profit by the designs of those who, if their conduct displayed no true wisdom, at least possessed, in an eminent degree, that species of wisdom which was calculated for the promotion of mischief. They knew upon what footing the connection between the two countries rested, and they felt the most ardent hope that the two Parliaments would be infatuated enough not to render their designs abortive, by fixing that connection upon a more solid basis.

These circumstances alone ought, in the opinion of Mr. Pitt, to induce the House deliberately, and dispassionately, to review the situation of the two countries, and to endeavour to find out a proper remedy for an evil, the existence of which was but too apparent. It required but a moment's reflection, for any man who had marked the progress of events, to decide upon the true state and character of their connection. It was evidently one which did not afford that security which, even in times less dangerous and critical than the present, would have been necessary to enable the empire to avail itself of its strength and its resources.

Mr. Pitt again entered upon a view of the act of 1782, in order to prove that it was not considered as a *final adjustment*, but that it was in the contemplation of the administration of that day, to pursue a line of conduct conformable to the part of the address which prayed his Majesty to take such further measures as to him seemed proper, to strengthen the connection between the two countries. The answer from the King stated, that, in compliance with the address, he would immediately take such measures as might be necessary for that purpose; and this answer was delivered to the House, by Mr. Fox himself, who was then Secretary of State. Mr. Pitt asserted, without the least fear of contradiction from any member whatever, that it was in the contemplation of the government of that day to adopt some measure of the nature alluded to in the address;—since that period, however, no such measure had been taken. He also maintained, that the very system which, by those very Ministers who brought it forward, was found to be imperfect, even for the purpose of maintaining the connection between the two countries, remained, at that moment, in the same imperfect state. It left the two countries with separate and independent legislatures, connected only by this tie, that the Executive Government in both was the same,—that the Crown exercised its power of assenting to Irish Acts of Parliament, under the great seal of Great Britain, and by the advice of British Ministers. Whether this was a sufficient tie to unite them in time of peace;—whether, in time of war, it was sufficient to consolidate their strength against a common enemy;—whether it was sufficient to guard against those local jealousies which must necessarily, sometimes, exist between countries so connected;—whether it was calculated to afford to Ireland all the important, commercial, and political, advantages which she would derive from a closer connection with Great Britain;—whether it could give to both nations that degree of strength and prosperity, which must be the result of an union, needed only be stated to be decided.

Mr. Pitt referred to the commercial propositions in order to avail himself of an opinion advanced, on that occasion, by Mr. Foster, who was then Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer, and who was now Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, where he had given his vote against the

measure of an union. Mr. Foster then told the Irish Parliament:—"If this infatuated country gives up the present offer, she may look for it again in vain." Here he was happily mistaken; Ireland had again the offer of the same advantages, but more complete, and, in all respects, better calculated to attain their object; and this offer Mr. Foster had exerted all his influence to reject. But he had farther said, "*things cannot remain as they are*,—commercial jealousy is roused,—it will increase with *two independent Legislatures*;—and without an united interest in commerce, in a commercial Empire, political union will receive many shocks, and *separation of interest* must threaten *separation of connection*, which every *honest Irishman* must shudder to look at, as a possible event."

These expressions were not quoted, by Mr. Pitt, as pledges given by Mr. Foster, that he would support a proposal for an union between the two countries; but to prove, that the situation of the two countries, after the *final* adjustment of 1782, was such, in his opinion, as led to the danger of a separation between them. What was the evil to which Mr. Foster alluded? Commercial jealousies between two countries, acting upon the laws of two independent legislatures, and the danger of these legislatures acting in opposition to each other.—How could this evil be remedied? By two means only; either by some compact entered into by the legislatures of the two countries respecting the mode of forming their commercial regulations, or else, by blending the two legislatures together; these were the only two means; and Mr. Pitt defied the wit of man to point out a third. The mode of compact was proposed in 1785; but, unfortunately, in spite of Mr. Foster's eloquence and authority, who then stated the importance of guarding against the evil, it so happened, that doctrines, derived chiefly from this side of the water, succeeded in convincing the Parliament of Ireland, that it would be inconsistent with their independence to enter into any compact whatever. Mr. Foster then asserted, that the unsettled state in which the matter was left, would give "Political Union many shocks, and lead to a separation of connection." This remedy having thus failed, no other now remained, than that of—*a Legislative Union.*

Mr. Pitt used many other arguments, and put several other cases, in order to demonstrate the inadequacy of the settlement of 1782, to produce a cordial harmony between the sister kingdoms, and the bad consequences resulting from the want of such harmony; and he then proceeded to a statement of the circumstances which peculiarly called upon the Parliament, at that moment, to remedy the existing imperfection. The country was then engaged in the most important and momentous conflict that ever occurred in the history of the world;—a conflict in which Great Britain was distinguished, for having made the only manly and successful stand against the common enemies of civilized society. She saw the point in which that enemy thought her the most assailable. Were not the Parliament then, bound, in policy and prudence, to strengthen that vulnerable point, involved, as the nation was, in a contest of liberty against despotism, of property against plunder and rapine, of religion and order against impiety and anarchy? There was a time when this would have been termed declamation; but, unfortunately, long and bitter experience had taught the people to feel, that it was only the feeble and imperfect representation of those calamities (the result of French principles and French arms) which were every day attested by the wounds of the bleeding world.

Was there a man who did not admit the importance of a measure which, at such a crisis, might augment the strength of the empire, and thereby ensure its safety? Would not that benefit to Ireland be, of itself, so solid, so inestimable, that, in comparison with it, all commercial interests, and the preservation of local habits and manners, would be trifling, even were they to be endangered by an Union, which they undoubtedly would not be? The people of Ireland, Mr. Pitt believed, were proud of being associated with the English in the contest in which they were engaged, and must feel the advantage of augmenting the general force of the empire. That an Union was calculated to produce that effect, he thought was a proposition which could not be disputed. There was not in any court of Europe a statesman so ill informed as not to know, that the power of the empire would be increased, to a very great extent indeed, by such a consolidation of the strength of the two kingdoms. The same language had been held by every writer of any infor-

mation on the subject, in the course of the century. If the ministers of our allies were to be asked, what measure they thought most likely to augment the power of the British empire, and consequently to increase that strength by which they were now protected; if the agent of our enemies were to be asked, what measure would be most likely to render their designs abortive, the answer would be the same in both cases, namely, the firm consolidation of every part of the empire.

There was another consideration well worth attention. What were the peculiar means by which we had been enabled to resist the unequalled, and eccentric, efforts of France, without any diminution, nay, with an increase, of our general prosperity? What, but the great commercial resources which we possessed? A measure, then, which must communicate to such a mighty limb of the empire as Ireland all the commercial advantages which Great Britain enjoyed, which would open the markets of the one country to the other, which would give them both the common use of their capitals, must, by diffusing a large portion of wealth over Ireland, considerably increase the resources, and consequently the strength, of the whole empire.

But it was not merely in this general view that Mr. Pitt thought the question ought to be considered. It ought to be looked to with a view peculiarly to the permanent interest and security of Ireland. When that country was threatened with the double danger of hostile attacks by enemies without, and of treason within, from what quarter did she derive the means of her deliverance?—From the naval force of Great Britain—from the voluntary exertions of her military of every description, not called for by law—and from her pecuniary resources, added to the loyalty and energy of the inhabitants of Ireland itself, of which it was impossible to speak with too much praise, and which shewed how well they deserved to be called the brethren of Britons. Their own courage might, perhaps, have ultimately succeeded in repelling the dangers by which they were threatened, but it would have been after a long contest, and after having waded through seas of blood. Were it certain, that the same ready and effectual assistance, which we had happily afforded on that occasion, would be always equally within our power? Great Britain had always

felt a common interest in the safety of Ireland: but that common interest was never so obvious and urgent as when the common enemy made her attack upon Great Britain through the medium of Ireland; and when their attack upon Ireland went to deprive her of her connection with Great Britain, and to substitute in its stead the new government of the French Republic. When that danger threatened Ireland, the purse of Great Britain was as open for the wants of Ireland as for the necessities of England.

These circumstances were stated by Mr. Pitt, not to upbraid Ireland for the benefits which England had conferred, but only to shew the friendship and good-will with which this country had acted towards her. But if struggles of this sort might and must return again,—if the worst dangers were those which were yet to come, dangers which might be greater from being more disguised,—if these situations might arise when the same means of relief were not in our power, what was the remedy which reason and policy pointed out? It was to identify them with us; it was to make them a part of the same community, by giving them a full share of those accumulated blessings which were diffused throughout Great Britain; it was, in a word, by giving them a full participation of the wealth, the power, and the stability, of the British empire. If, then, the measure came recommended, not only by the obvious defects of the system which then existed, but that it had also the pre-eminent recommendation of increasing the general power of the empire, and of guarding against future danger from the common enemy, it was next to be considered in its effects upon the internal condition of Ireland.

Mr. Pitt was perfectly aware that, so long as Ireland was separated from Great Britain, any attempt on our part to provide measures which might be thought salutary, as respecting questions of contending sects or parties, of the claimed rights of the Catholics, or of the precautions necessary for the security of the Protestants;—all these, though they might have been brought forward by the very persons who were the advocates of the final adjustment of 1782, were, in fact, attacks upon the independence of the Irish Parliament, and attempts to usurp the right of deciding on points which could only be brought within the province

of the British Parliament by compact. Until the kingdoms were united, any attempt to make regulations here for the internal state of Ireland must certainly be a violation of her independence. But, feeling as he did for the interests and welfare of the Irish, he could not be inattentive to passing events; he must, therefore, repeat, that whoever looked at the circumstances to which he had alluded,—whoever considered that the enemy had shewn by their conduct that they considered Ireland as the weakest and most assailable part of the empire,—whoever had reflected upon those dreadful and inexcusable cruelties, instigated by the enemies of both countries, and upon those lamentable severities with which the exertions for the defence of Ireland were unhapily, but unavoidably, attended, and the necessity of which was itself one great aggravation of the crimes and treasons which led to them, must feel that, as it now stood composed, in the hostile division of its sects, in the animosities existing between ancient settlers and original inhabitants, in the ignorance and want of civilization which marked that country more than almost any other country in Europe, in the unfortunate prevalence of Jacobin principles, arising from these causes, and augmenting their malignity, and which had produced that distressed state which they now deplored;—every one, who reflected upon all these circumstances, must agree with him, in thinking that there was no cure but in the formation of a general Imperial Legislature, free alike from terror and from resentment, removed from the danger and agitation, uninfluenced by the prejudices, and uninflamed by the passions, of that distracted country.

Among the great and known defects of Ireland, as Mr. Pitt had observed, in the first debate upon the subject, one of the most prominent features was, its want of industry and of capital; and how were those wants to be supplied, but by blending more closely with Ireland the industry and capital of this country? But, above all, what was their situation, in respect of the great religious distinctions between the people of Ireland? The Protestant felt that the claims of the Catholics threatened the existence of the Protestant ascendancy; while, on the other hand, the great body of Catholics felt the establishment of the National Church, and their exclusion from the exercise of certain rights

and privileges, a grievance. Between the two it became a matter of difficulty, in the minds of many persons, whether it would be better to listen only to the fears of the former, or to grant the claims of the latter.

Mr. Pitt was well aware that the subject of religious distinction was a dangerous and delicate topic, especially when applied to such a country as Ireland, the situation of which, in this respect, was different from that of any other country. Where the established religion of the State was the same as the general religion of the Empire, and where the property of the country was in the hands of a comparatively small number of persons professing that established religion, it was not easy to say, on general principles, what system of Church Establishment, in such a country, would be free from difficulty and inconvenience. By many, he knew, it would be contended, that the religion professed by the majority of the people would, at least, be entitled to an equality of privileges. He had heard such an argument used in the British House of Commons; but those who applied it, without qualification, to the case of Ireland, forgot the principles on which English interest and English connection had been established in that country, and on which its present legislature was formed. No man could say, that, in the actual state of things, while Ireland remained a separate kingdom, full concessions could be made to the Catholics, without endangering the State, and shaking the constitution of Ireland to its centre.

On the other hand, without anticipating the discussion, or the propriety of agitating the question, or saying how soon or how late it might be fit to discuss it, two propositions were indisputable; first, when the conduct of the Catholics should be such as to make it safe for the government to admit them to the participation of the privileges granted to those of the established religion, and when the temper of the times should be favourable to such a measure,—when those events should take place, it was obvious, that such a question might be agitated in an united, imperial, Parliament, with much greater safety than it could be in a separate legislature. In the second place, he thought it certain that, even for whatever period it might be deemed necessary,

after the Union, to withhold from the Catholics the enjoyment of those advantages, many of the objections which arose out of their present situation would be removed, if the Protestant Legislature were no longer separate and local, but general and imperial; and the Catholics themselves would at once feel a mitigation of the most goading and irritating of their present causes of complaint.

How far, in addition to this great and leading consideration, it might also be wise and practicable to accompany the measure by some mode of relieving the lower orders from the pressure of tithes, which, in many instances, operated, at present, as a great practical evil; * or to make, under proper regulations, and without breaking in on the security of the existing Protestant establishment, an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic clergy, it was not then necessary to discuss. It was sufficient to observe, that these, and all other subordinate points, connected with the same subject, were more likely to be permanently and satisfactorily settled by an united legislature, than by any local arrangements. On these grounds, he contended that, with a view to providing an effectual remedy for the distractions which had unhappily prevailed in Ireland, with a view of removing those causes which had endangered, and which still endangered, its security; the measures which he meant to propose promised to be more effectual than any other which could be devised; and, on these grounds alone, if there existed no other, he should feel it his duty to submit them to the House.

But, besides what related most immediately to the great object of healing the dissensions, and providing for the internal tranquillity, of

* I am unable to conceive on what grounds Mr. Pitt founded his notions respecting the oppressive operation of tithes on the tenantry of Ireland, nor have I been able to discover any cause for questioning the validity of the reasons assigned, in a former part, for the belief that the abolition of tithes would afford not the smallest relief to the farmer or the peasant; confirmed, as they are, by the recorded opinions of the most able and intelligent leaders of the rebellion, who decidedly stated, that such a measure would only increase the wealth of the land-owner, and that the tenant would have still more to pay for land tithe free, than he actually paid while tithes were payable to the Clergy.

Ireland, there were other objects, which, though comparatively with that of inferior importance, were yet in themselves highly material; and, in a secondary view, well worthy of attention. It had been asked what positive advantages would Ireland derive from an Union? Mr. Pitt presumed that the considerations which he had already urged would be regarded as a sufficient answer to that question. But, in fact, it was to be considered in another point of view, when it would be found to bear some resemblance to a question which had been repeatedly put, during the six preceding years, by the leading members of Opposition. What were the advantages which Great Britain had gained by the present war with France?

To this, the brilliant successes of the British arms by sea and land, our unexampled naval victories over all our enemies, the solid acquisition of valuable territory, the general increase of our power, the progressive extension of our commerce, and a series of events more glorious than any that ever adorned the page of our history, afforded at once an ample and a satisfactory answer. But there was another general answer, which had been uniformly given, and which would alone be sufficient; it was, that we did not enter into the war for any purpose of ambition; our object was not to acquire, but to preserve; and, in that sense, what we had gained by the war was, in one word, ALL that we should have lost without it; it was the preservation of our constitution, our independence, our honour, our existence, as a nation.

In the same manner the question with respect to Ireland might be answered; the general advantages might be enumerated which Ireland would derive from the effects of the arrangement to which reference had been made; the protection which she would secure to herself in the hour of danger; the most effectual means of increasing her commerce, and improving her agriculture, the command of English capital, the infusion of English manners and English industry, necessarily tending to meliorate her condition, to accelerate the progress of internal civilization, and to terminate those feuds and dissensions which now distracted the country, and which she did not possess, within herself, the power either to controul or to extinguish. She would see the

avenue to honours, to distinctions, and to exalted situations in the general seat of empire, opened to all those whose abilities and talents enabled them to indulge an honourable and laudable ambition.

But, independent of all these positive advantages, it might also be answered, that the question was not what Ireland was to gain, but what she was to preserve; not merely how she might best improve her situation, but how she was to avert a pressing and immediate danger. In this view, what she gained was the preservation of all those blessings arising from the British constitution, and which were inseparable from her connection with Great Britain; those blessings, of which it had long been the aim of France, in conjunction with domestic traitors, to deprive her, and, on their ruins, to establish, (with all its attendant miseries and horrors) a Jacobin Republic, founded on French influence, and existing only in subserviency to France.

Such would be the answer, if the attention were directed only to the question of general advantage; and the answer would be full and sufficient; but as it had been more particularly and pointedly asked, what commercial and manufacturing advantages would result to Ireland from the Union, Mr. Pitt deemed it necessary to satisfy the House on those points. And, in this part of his argument, he quoted several passages, from a speech of Mr. Foster, on the commercial propositions, in 1785, whose authority, (as he was an enemy to the Union) he justly conceived would have more weight with the Opposition than his own. Speaking of a solid and unalterable compact between the two countries, speaking expressly of the peculiar importance of insuring the continuance of those commercial benefits, which Ireland, at that time, held only at the discretion of this country, he said, "The exportation of Irish products to England, amounts to two millions and an half annually; and the exportation of British products to Ireland amounts to but one million." Mr. Foster then proceeded to reason upon the advantage which Ireland would derive, under such circumstances, from guarding against mutual prohibition; and he accompanied the statement just quoted, with this observation:—"If, indeed, the adjustment were to take away the benefit from Ireland, it would be a good cause for reject-

ing it; but, as it for ever confirmed all the advantages we derive from our linen trade, and binds England from making any law that can be injurious to it, surely, gentlemen who regard that trade, and *whose fortunes and rents depend on its prosperity, will not entertain a moment's doubt about embracing the offer.*"

Such was the reasoning of the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day, which Mr. Pitt considered to have been perfectly just. With respect to his late opinions, Mr. Pitt did not think he could more forcibly reply to a person who signed his name to propositions which declared, that *the ruin of the linen trade of Ireland was likely to be the consequence of an Union,* than by opposing to him his own opinion. That opinion he should be able to strengthen by stating, that the progress which had been made in commercial advantages to Ireland, since 1785, had been such as to render his argument still more applicable. What was the nature of that commerce explained by the same person in so concise and forcible a manner, that Mr. Pitt was happy to use his own statement; " Britain," says Mr. Foster, " imports annually from us, two millions five hundred thousand pounds of our products, all, or very nearly all, duty free, and covenants never to lay a duty on them. We import about a million of her's, and raise a revenue on almost every article of it, and reserve the power of continuing that revenue. She exports to us salt for our fisheries and provisions; hops, which we cannot grow; coals, which we cannot raise; tin, which we have not; and bark, which we cannot get elsewhere; and all these without reserving any duty."

In the same manner Mr. Foster's speech pointed out the advantages of the commercial propositions, then under consideration, as the ground-work of a compact between the two countries, in 1785, on commercial subjects.—But the trade was now infinitely more advantaous to Ireland. Mr. Pitt produced documents to prove that the manufactures exported to Ireland from Great Britain, in 1797, very little exceeded a million sterling, (the articles of produce amounted to nearly the same sum,) while Great Britain, on the other hand, imported from Ireland to the amount of near three millions in the manufactured

articles of linen and linen-yarn, and between two or three millions in provisions and cattle, besides corn, and other articles of produce.

There were other circumstances advantageous to Ireland,—articles which were essential to her trade, and to her subsistence, or which served as raw materials for her manufactures, were sent from England free from duty; while all that England took back from Ireland was liable to an export-duty in that country; the increasing produce of the chief article of Irish manufacture, and four-fifths of the whole export trade of Ireland, were to be ascribed not to that *Independent Legislature*, but to the liberality of the British Parliament. It was by the free admission of linens for our market, and the bounties granted by Parliament on its re-export, that the linen-trade had been brought to the height to which it had now attained. To the Parliament of England, then, was it owing, that a market had been opened for the staple manufacture of Ireland, to the amount of three millions annually. By the bounty which we gave to Ireland we afforded her a double market for her linen, and (which was still more striking and important) we had prevented a competition against her, arising from the superior cheapness of the linen manufactures of the Continent, by subjecting their importation to a duty of thirty per cent. Nothing would more clearly shew what would be the danger to Ireland from the competition in all its principal branches of the linen trade, than the simple fact, that we, even then, imported foreign linen under that heavy duty, to an amount equal to a seventh part of all that Ireland was able to send us, with the preference already stated. By this arrangement alone, therefore, we must be considered, either as foregoing between seven and eight hundred thousand pounds per annum in revenue, which we should collect if we chose to levy the same duty on all linens, Irish as well as foreign; or, on the other hand, as sacrificing, perhaps, at least a million sterling in the price paid for those articles, by the subjects of this country, which might be saved, if we allowed the importation of all linen, foreign as well as Irish, equally free from duty.

The proposed Union, however, was, in its effects, calculated not

merely to confirm, but to extend, the advantages which Mr. Foster had so strongly insisted on. It was obvious, indeed, that a more full and perfect connection between the two countries, from whatever cause it might arise, must produce a greater facility and freedom of commercial intercourse, and ultimately tend to the benefit of both. The advantages to be derived to either country, from such an arrangement, must, indeed, in a great measure, be gradual; but they were not, on that account, the less certain; and here Mr. Pitt had again recourse to Mr. Foster's speech for a correct delineation of them.

"Gentlemen,—undervalue the reduction of British duties on our manufactures. I agree with them that it may not operate soon; but we are to look forward to a final settlement, and it is impossible but that, in time, with as good a climate, equal natural powers, cheaper food, and fewer taxes, we must be able to sell to them. When commercial jealousy shall be banished by final settlement, and trade take its natural and steady course, the kingdoms will cease to look to rivalship, each will make that fabric which it can do cheapest, and buy from the other what it cannot make so advantageously. Labour will be then truly employed to profit, not diverted by bounties, jealousies, or legislative interference, from its natural and beneficial course. This system will attain its real object, consolidating the strength of the remaining part of the empire, by encouraging the communications of markets among themselves, with preference to every part against all strangers."

Mr. Pitt justly conceived himself to be effectually sheltered from any imputation of presumption, in hazarding doubtful opinions, upon such a subject, after he had so fortified himself with the arguments of a most competent judge, who, when he delivered these sentiments, judged dispassionately. He reminded the House that, for the commercial advantages which Ireland enjoyed, she was solely indebted to the liberal policy of Great Britain. Nor was he afraid of rousing the jealousy of British manufacturers, by a fair statement of these advantages. The interests of the two countries were the same; and the property of one was the property of the other.

If ever, indeed, he should have the misfortune to witness the melancholy moment when such principles must be abandoned, when all hope of seeing Ireland permanently and securely connected with this country should be at an end, we should, at least, have the consolation of knowing, that it would not be the want of temper or forbearance, of conciliation, of kindness, or of full explanation on our part, which would have produced an event so fatal to Ireland, and so dangerous to Great Britain. If ever the over-bearing power of prejudice and passion should produce that fatal consequence, it would too late be perceived and acknowledged, that all the great commercial advantages which Ireland then enjoyed, and which were continually increasing, were to be ascribed to the liberal conduct, the fostering care, of the British Empire, extended to the sister kingdom, as to a part of ourselves, and not (as had, fallaciously, and vainly, been pretended) to any thing which had been done, or could be done, by the independent power of her own separate legislature.

Having thus stated, fully and perspicuously, his reasons for thinking an Union adviseable, for wishing it to be proposed to the Parliament of Ireland, with temper and fairness; and for considering it as entitled, at least, to a calm and dispassionate discussion in that kingdom; he proceeded to answer some objections which he admitted to be plausible, and which he knew to have had great influence with the Irish Parliament.

The first objection to which he turned his attention was that advanced by Mr. Sheridan, who had insisted on the incompetency of the Irish parliament to conclude an Union; a question to which Mr. Pitt had briefly adverted, on the first discussion of the subject in the House. But, as it involved a great consititutional point, a question of fundamental importance, he now deemed it necessary to consider it more at large. Mr. Pitt insisted on the competency of the Parliament of Ireland (representing, as it did, in the language of our constitution, *lawfully, fully, and freely, all the estates of the people of the realm*") to make laws to bind that people; and this, he thought, must be admitted, unless Mr. Sheridan was disposed

to distinguish that Parliament from the Parliament of Great Britain, and, while he maintained the independence of the Irish legislature, yet denied to it the lawful and essential powers of Parliament. No man, who asserted the parliament of Ireland to be co-equal with our own, could deny its competency on this question, unless he meant to go the length of denying, at the same moment, the whole of the authority of the Parliament of Great Britain—to shake every principle of legislation, and to maintain, that all the acts passed, and every thing done, by Parliament, or sanctioned by its authority, however sacred, however beneficial, was neither more nor less than an act of usurpation. He must not only deny the validity of the Union between Scotland and England, but he must deny the authority of every one of the proceedings of the united legislature since the Union; nay, he must go still farther, and deny the authority under which the House then sat and deliberated, as a House of Parliament. Of course he must deny the validity of the adjustment of 1782, and call in question every measure which he had himself been the most forward to have enforced.

If this principle of the incompetency of Parliament to the decision of the measure were admitted, or if it were contended, that Parliament had no legitimate authority to discuss and decide upon it, the House would be driven to the necessity of recognizing a principle, the most dangerous that ever was adopted in any civilized State. Mr. Pitt meant the principle, that Parliament could not adopt any measure new in its nature, and of great importance, without appealing to the constituent and delegating authority, for directions. If that doctrine were true, to what an extent would it carry the legislature. If such an argument could be set up and maintained, the Parliament acted without any legitimate authority when they created the principality of Wales, or of either of the counties palatine of England. Every law that Parliament ever made, without such appeal, either as to its own frame and constitution, as to the qualification of the electors and of the elected, or as to the great and fundamental point of the succession to the Crown, was a breach of treaty, and an act of usurpation.

What was to be thought of the power of the Irish Parliament, which, without any fresh delegation from its Protestant constituents, associated to itself the Catholic electors, and thus destroyed the fundamental distinction on which it was formed? Mr. Pitt deprecated the idea of objecting to, or of blaming, any of these measures; he only stated the extent to which the principle, that the Parliament had no authority to decide on the Union, would lead; and, if it were admitted in one case, it must be admitted in all. Would any man say, that although a Protestant Parliament in Ireland, chosen exclusively by Protestant constituents, had, by its own inherent power, and without consulting those constituents, admitted and comprehended the Catholics, who were, till then, in fact, a separate community, that Parliament cannot associate itself with another Protestant community, represented by a Protestant Parliament, having one intent with itself, and similar in its laws, its constitution, and its established religion? What must be said by those who had, at any time, been friends to any plan of Parliamentary Reform, and particularly to such as had been, most recently, brought forward, either in Great Britain or in Ireland? Whatever might have been, by some, thought of the propriety of the measure, no one had ever expressed a doubt of the competency of Parliament to entertain and discuss it. Yet no man could maintain the principle of those plans, without contending that, as a member of Parliament, he possessed a right to concur in the disfranchisement of those who had sent him to Parliament, and to select others, by whom he was not elected, in their stead. No sufficient distinction, in point of principle, could be maintained for a moment; and Mr. Pitt declared that he should not have dwelt so long, and so earnestly, upon the subject, were he not convinced, that it was connected, in part, with all those false and dangerous notions on the subject of government, which had lately become too prevalent in the world. It might, in fact, be traced to that gross perversion of the principles of all political society, which rested on the supposition that there existed continually, in every government, a sovereignty *in abeyance*, as it were, on the part of the people, ready to be called forth on every occasion; or rather, on every pretence, when it might suit the purposes of the party or faction, who were the advocates of that doctrine, to suppose

an occasion for its exertion. It was in those false principles that were contained the seeds of all the misery, desolation, and ruin, which, in the present day, had spread themselves over so large a proportion of the habitable world.

These principles were, at length, so well known, and so well understood, in their practical effects, that they could no longer hope for one enlightened and intelligent advocate, when they appeared in their true colours. Yet, with all the horror that was felt at the effect of them, with all the confirmed and increasing love and veneration which was felt towards the constitution of the country, founded as it was both in theory and experience, on principles directly the reverse, there were some persons who, while they abhorred and rejected such opinions, when presented to them in their naked deformity, suffered them, in a more disguised shape, to be infused into their minds, and insensibly to influence and bias their sentiments and arguments on the greatest and most important discussions. This concealed poison was now more to be dreaded than any open attempt to support such principles by argument, or to enforce them by arms. No society, whatever might be its particular form, could long subsist if this principle were once admitted. In every government there must reside, somewhere, a supreme, absolute, and unlimited, authority. This was equally true of every lawful monarchy —of every aristocracy—of every pure democracy—(if, indeed, such a form of government ever had existed, or ever could exist) and of those mixed constitutions, formed and compounded from the others, which Englishmen were justly inclined to prefer to any of them. In all these governments, indeed alike, that power might by possibility be abused; but whether the abuse was such as to justify and call for the interference of the people collectively, or, more properly speaking, of any portion of them, must always be an extreme case, and a question of the greatest and most perilous responsibility; not in law only, but in conscience and in duty, to all those who either acted upon it themselves, or persuaded others to do so. But no provision for such a case ever had been, or ever could be, made beforehand; it formed no chapter in any known code of laws; it could find no place in any system of human jurisprudence. But, above all, if such a principle could make no part of any established

constitution, not even of those where the government was so framed as to be most liable to an abuse of its powers, it would be preposterous indeed, to suppose that it could be admitted in one where those powers were so distributed and balanced as to furnish the best security against the probability of such an abuse. Should that principle be sanctioned as a necessary part of the best government, which could not be permitted to exist as an established check, even upon the worst? Pregnant as it was with danger and confusion, should it be received and authorized in proportion as every reason, which could ever make it necessary to recur to it, was not likely to exist? Yet, strange to say, in proportion as we were less likely to have occasion for so desperate a remedy, in proportion as a government was so framed as to provide within itself the best guard and control on the exercise of every branch of authority, to furnish the means of preventing or correcting every abuse of power, and to secure, by its own natural operation, a due attention to the interest and feelings of every part of the community, in that very proportion persons had been found perverse enough to imagine, that such a constitution admitted and recognized, as a part of it, that which was inconsistent with the nature of any government, and, above all, inapplicable to our own.

Mr. Pitt would not have felt it necessary to say so much upon the subject, if he had not been sensible that this false and dangerous mockery of the *Sovereignty of the People* was, in truth, one of the chief elements of Jacobinism, one of the favourite impostures to mislead the understanding, and to flatter and inflame the passions of the mass of mankind, who had not the opportunity of examining and exposing it; and that, as such, on every occasion, and in every shape in which it appeared, it ought to be combated and resisted by every friend to civil order, and to the peace and happiness of mankind.

The next, and not the least prevalent, objection to the union, was one which was contained in words which were an appeal to a natural and laudable, but, in Mr. Pitt's estimation, an erroneous and mistaken sense, of national pride. It was an appeal to the generous and noble passions of a nation, easily inflamed by any supposed attack upon its

honour;—Mr. Pitt met the attempt to represent the question of an union, by compact between the Parliaments of the two kingdoms, as a question involving the independence of Ireland. It had been said, that no compensation could be made to any country for the surrender of its national independence. On that, as on every part of this momentous question, Mr. Pitt expressed his earnest desire, that the House should come closely to the point, that they should sift it to the bottom, and ascertain upon what grounds and principles their opinion really rested. Did they mean, he asked, to maintain that, in any humiliating, any degrading, sense of the word, which could be acted upon practically as a rule, and which could lead to any useful conclusion, at any time when the governments of any two separate countries united in forming one more extensive empire, the individuals who composed either of the former narrow societies were afterwads less members of an independent country, or, to any valuable and useful purpose, less possessed of political freedom or of civil happiness, than they were before? It must be obvious, he contended, to every one who looked at the subject, in tracing the histories of all the countries the most proud of their present existing independence, of all the nations in Europe, there was not one that could exist in the state in which it then stood, if that principle had been acted upon by our forefathers; and Europe must have remained to that hour in a state of ignorance and barbarism, from the perpetual warfare of independent and petty states. In the instance of our own country, it would be a superfluous waste of time to enumerate the steps by which all its parts were formed into one kingdom; but would any man, in general, assert, that, in all the different unions which had formed the principal states of Europe, their inhabitants had become less free, that they had less of which to be proud, less scope for their own exertions, than they had in their former situations? If this doctrine were to obtain general currency, what would be the actual situation of any one county of England, or of any one county of Ireland, now united under the independent Parliament of that kingdom? If the principle were pushed to its full extent, it was obviously incompatible with all civil society. As the former principle of the sovereignty of the people struck at the foundation of all govern-

ments, so was this equally hostile to all political confederacy, and mankind must be driven back to what is called the state of nature.

But while he combated this general and abstract principle, which would operate as a radical objection to every union between separate states, Mr. Pitt took care to observe that he did not mean to contend that there was, in no case, just ground for such a sentiment. So far from entertaining any such opinion, he admitted that it might become, on many occasions, the first duty of a free and generous people to resist an union. If there existed a country which contained within itself the means of military protection, the naval force necessary for its defence, which furnished objects of industry sufficient for the subsistence of its inhabitants, and pecuniary resources adequate to maintaining, with dignity, the rank which it had attained among the nations of the world; if, above all, it enjoyed the blessings of internal content and tranquillity, and possessed a distinct constitution of its own, the defects of which, if any there were, it had within itself the means of correcting; and if that constitution were equal, if not superior, to that of any other in the world, or, (which was nearly the same thing) if those who lived under it believed it to be so, and fondly cherished that opinion, he could indeed well understand that such a country must be jealous of any measure which, even by its own consent, under the authority of its own lawful government, was to associate it as a part of a larger and more extensive empire.

But if, on the other hand, it should happen that there was a country which, against the greatest of all dangers, that threatened its peace and security, had not adequate means of protecting itself without the aid of another nation; if that other were a neighbouring and a kindred nation, speaking the same language, having laws, customs, and habits, the same in principle, but carried to a greater degree of perfection, with a more extensive commerce, and more abundant means of acquiring and diffusing national wealth; the stability of whose government, the excellence of whose constitution, was, more than ever, the admiration and envy of Europe, and of which the very country in question could only boast an inadequate and imperfect resemblance; under such cir-

cumstances, he would ask, what conduct would be prescribed by every rational principle of dignity, of honour, or of interest? Was not this a faithful description of the circumstances which ought to dispose Ireland to an Union? Was not Great Britain precisely the nation with which, on these principles, a country, situated as Ireland was, would desire to unite? Did an union, under such circumstances, by free consent, and on just and equal terms, deserve to be branded as a proposal for subjecting Ireland to a foreign yoke? Was it not rather a free and voluntary association of two great countries, which joined, for their common benefit, in one empire, where each would retain its proportional weight and importance, under the security of equal laws, reciprocal affection, and inseparable interests, and which wanted nothing but that indissoluble connection to render both invincible?

Non ego nec Teucris Italos parere jubebo
Nec nova regna peto; paribus se legibus ambæ
Invictæ gentes æterna in fœdera mittant.

It had been urged, as another objection to the Union, that it would necessarily increase one of the evils of which Ireland had to complain, the want of a sufficient population, by augmenting the number of absentees. Mr. Pitt admitted that this would be the case to a limited extent, during a part of the year; but he contended that such a disadvantage would be more than counterbalanced by the operation of the system in other respects.

If it were true that the measure had a direct tendency to admit the introduction of that British capital into Ireland, which was most likely to give life to all the operations of commerce, and to all the improvements of agriculture; if it were that which, above all other considerations, was best calculated to give security, quiet, and internal repose, to that country; if it were likely to remove the chief bar to the internal advancement of wealth and of civilization, by a more intimate intercourse with England; if it were more likely to communicate from hence those habits which distinguished this country, and which, by a continued gradation, united the highest and the lowest orders of the community, without a chasm in any part of the social system; if it

were likely to open to commerce new markets, and fresh resources of wealth and industry;—could wealth, could industry, could civilization, increase among the whole bulk of the people without much more than counterbalancing the partial effect of the removal of the few individuals who, for a small part of the year, would follow the seat of legislation? If, notwithstanding the absence of Parliament from Dublin, it would still remain the centre of education, and of the internal commerce of a country increasing in improvement; if it would still remain the seat of legal discussion, which must always increase with an increase of property and occupation, could it be supposed, with a view even to the interests of those to whose partial interests a most successful appeal had been made; with a view either to the respectable body of the bar, to the merchant, or shopkeeper of Dublin, (if it were possible to suppose that such a transaction ought to be referred to that single criterion) that they would not find their proportionate share of advantage in the general advantage of the State. It should be remembered also, that, if the transfer of the seat of legislation might call from Ireland to England the members of the United Parliament, yet, after the Union, property, influence, and consideration in Ireland would lead, as much as in Great Britain, to all the objects of imperial ambition; and there must, consequently, exist a new incitement to persons to acquire property in that country, and to those who possessed it, to reside there, and to cultivate the good opinion of those with whom they lived, and to extend and improve their influence and connections.

Fortunately, experience combined with theory to demonstrate the justice and force of this argument. What result had the Union with Scotland produced to that country? An Union which had been as much opposed, and by much the same arguments, prejudices, and misconceptions, as were urged against the present measure; and which had created, too, the same alarms, and provoked the same outrages, as had lately taken place in Dublin. The population of Edinburgh had been more than doubled since the Union, and a new city added to the old. But it might be objected, that Edinburgh had engrossed all the commerce of that country, and had those advantages which Dublin could not expect. Yet, while Edinburgh, deprived of its parliament, but

retaining, as Dublin would retain, its courts of justice; continuing, as Dublin would continue, the resort of those whose circumstances would not permit them to visit a distant metropolis; continuing, as Dublin would continue, the seat of national education, while Edinburgh had baffled all the predictions of that period, what had been the situation of Glasgow? The population of Glasgow, since the Union, had increased in the proportion of between five and six to one; and its progress in manufactures, and the increase of all its general advantages, would suffice to remove those gloomy apprehensions which had been so industriously excited with respect to Ireland.

It had been further contended, that the security of the commercial privileges, which Ireland enjoyed, would be affected by the proposed Union. But, as Mr. Pitt had shewn, these privileges had been falsely imputed to the independence of the Irish Parliament, when, in fact, they were imputable to the exercise of the voluntary discretion of the British Parliament, unbound by compact, prompted only by its natural disposition, to consider the interests of Ireland the same as its own; and if that had been done while Ireland had been only united to us in the imperfect and precarious manner in which it then was, while it had a separate Parliament, notwithstanding the commercial jealousies of our own manufacturers; if, under these circumstances, England had displayed such a liberal disposition towards her, at a time when Ireland had no share in our representation, what fresh ground could there be for apprehension, when she should have her proportionate weight in the legislature, and should be united with us, as closely as Lancashire or Yorkshire, or any other county in Great Britain?

One other general topic of objection, Mr. Pitt judged it necessary to notice;—the idea had been propagated, most industriously, that the main principle of the measure was to subject Ireland to a load of debt, and an increase of taxes; and to expose her to the consequences of all our alleged difficulties and supposed necessities. He hoped, that the zeal, the spirit, and the liberal and enlarged policy of England, had given ample proof, that it was not from a pecuniary motive that she sought an Union: If it were not desirable on the grounds which had

been stated, it could not be recommended for the mere purpose of taxation. But it was only necessary, in order to quiet any jealous feelings on that subject, to look again to Scotland. Was there any instance in which, with forty-five members on her part, and five hundred and thirteen on ours, she had paid more than her proportion of the general burdens? Was there then any ground of apprehension that the British Parliament would tax Ireland more heavily when she became associated with ourselves?—To tax in its due proportion, the whole of the empire, to the utter exclusion of the idea of the predominance of one part of society over another, was the great characteristic of British finance, as equality of laws was of the British Constitution.

But, in addition to this, when the details of the proposition came to be settled, it would be in the power of Parliament to fix, for any number of years which might be thought proper, the proportion by which the contributions of Ireland to the expences of the State should be regulated; that these proportions should not be such as would make a contribution greater than the necessary amount of its own present necessary expences as a separate kingdom,—and, even after that limited period, the proportion of the whole contribution, from time to time, might be made to depend on the comparative produce, in each kingdom, of such general taxes as might be thought to afford the best criterion of their respective wealth. Or, what Mr. Pitt hoped would be found practicable, the system of internal taxation in each country might gradually be so equalized and assimilated, on the leading articles, as to make all rules of specific proportion unnecessary, and to secure that Ireland should never be taxed but in proportion as we should tax ourselves.

The application of these principles was left for future discussion; Mr. Pitt only mentioned them as strongly shewing, from the misrepresentation which had taken place on this part of the subject, how incumbent it was upon the House to receive the proposition to be submitted to it, and to adopt, after close deliberation, such resolutions as might record to Ireland the terms upon which the British Parliament were ready to meet her; and, in the mean time, he should wait, not without impatience,

but without dissatisfaction, for that moment when the effect of reason and discussion might reconcile the minds of men in that kingdom to a measure which, he was sure, would be found as necessary for their peace and happiness, as it would be conducive to the general security and advantage of the British empire.—Mr. Pitt then read the following resolutions to the House:

"Resolved,—First, That in order to promote and secure the essential interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the strength, power, and resources, of the British empire, it will be advisable to concur in such measures as may best tend to unite the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, in such manner, and on such terms and conditions, as may be established by acts of the respective Parliaments of his Majesty's said kingdoms.

"Second, That it appears to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose, as the first article to serve as a basis of the said Union, that the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, upon a day to be agreed upon, be united into one kingdom, by the name of the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

"Third, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose, that the succession to the Monarchy and the Imperial Crown of the said United Kingdoms shall continue limited and settled, in the same manner as the Imperial Crown of the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing laws, and to the terms of the Union between England and Scotland.

"Fourth, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose, that the said United kingdoms be represented in one and the same Parliament, to be styled the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and that such a number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and such a number of the Members of the House of Commons as shall be hereafter agreed upon by acts of the respective Parliaments as aforesaid, shall sit and vote in the

said Parliament, on the part of Ireland, and shall be summoned, chosen, and returned, in such manner as shall be fixed by an Act of Parliament of Ireland previous to the said Union; and that every Member hereafter to sit and vote in the said Parliament of the United Kingdom, shall, until the said Parliament shall otherwise provide, take, and subscribe, the same oaths, and make the same declarations, as are by law required to be taken, subscribed, and made, by the Members of the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

"Fifth, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the Churches of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, thereof, shall be preserved as now by law established.

"Sixth, That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that his Majesty's subjects in Ireland shall, at all times hereafter, be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing with respect to trade and navigation, in all ports and places belonging to Great Britain, and in all cases in respect to which treaties shall be made by his Majesty, his heirs, or successors, with any foreign power, as his Majesty's subjects in Great Britain; that no duty shall be imposed on the import or export, between Great Britain and Ireland, of any articles now duty free; and that on other articles there shall be established, for a time to be limited, such a moderate rate of equal duties as shall, previous to the Union, be agreed upon and approved by the respective Parliaments; subject, after the expiration of such limited time, to be diminished equally with respect to both kingdoms, but in no case to be increased; that all articles which may, at any time hereafter, be imported into Great Britain from foreign parts, shall be importable through either kingdom into the other, subject to the like duties and regulations as if the same were imported directly from foreign parts; that where any articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture, of either kingdom, are subject to any internal duty in one kingdom, such countervailing duties (over and above any duties on Import to be fixed as aforesaid) shall be imposed, as shall be necessary to prevent any inequality in that respect, and that all other matters in

trade and commerce other than the foregoing, and than such others as may before the Union be specially agreed upon for the due encouragement of the agriculture and manufactures of the respective kingdoms, shall remain to be regulated from time to time by the United Parliament.

" Seventh, That for the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that the charge arising from the payment of the interest, or sinking fund for the reduction of the principle of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively; that, for a number of years to be limited, the future ordinary expences of the United Kingdom, in peace or war, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such proportions as shall be established by the respective Parliaments previous to the Union; and that, after the expiration of the time to be so limited, the proportions shall not be liable to be varied, except according to such rates and principles as shall be in like manner agreed upon previous to the Union.

" Eighth, That for the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that all laws in force at the time of the Union, and that all the Courts of civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the respective kingdoms, shall remain as now by law established within the same, subject only to such alterations or regulations, from time to time, as circumstances may appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to require.

" That the foregoing resolutions be laid before his Majesty, with an humble address, assuring his Majesty, that we have proceeded with the utmost attention to the consideration of the important objects recommended to us in his Majesty's most gracious Message.

" That we entertain a firm persuasion, that a complete and entire Union between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal and liberal principles, on the similarity of laws, constitution, and government, and on a sense of mutual interests and affections, by promoting the security, wealth, and commerce, of the respective kingdoms, and by allaying the distractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland, must afford fresh

means of opposing, at all times, an effectual resistance to the destructive projects of our foreign and domestic enemies, and must tend to confirm and augment the stability, power, and resources of the empire.

"Impressed with these considerations, we feel it our duty humbly to lay before his Majesty such propositions as appear to us best calculated to form the basis of such a settlement, leaving it to his Majesty's wisdom, at such a time and in such manner as his Majesty, in his parental solicitude for the happiness of his people, shall judge fit, to communicate these propositions to his Parliament of Ireland, with whom we shall be at all times ready to concur in all such measures as shall be found most conducive to the accomplishment of this great and salutary work. And we trust that, after full and mature consideration, such a settlement may be framed and established, by the deliberate consent of the Parliaments of both kingdoms, as may be conformable to the sentiments, wishes, and real interests, of his Majesty's faithful subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, and may unite them inseparably in the full enjoyment of the blessings of our free and invaluable constitution, in the support of the honour and dignity of his Majesty's crown, and in the preservation and advancement of the welfare and prosperity of the whole British empire."

This luminous speech, in which all the best powers of eloquence were displayed, and which placed the important subject to which it related in the clearest point of view, was answered by Mr. Sheridan; who complimented Mr. Pitt as an orator, but condemned him as a statesman. All the advantages which it was proposed by the Union to confer upon Ireland, ought, in Mr. Sheridan's estimation, to be granted by England without the Union. And, wholly unconvinced by the strong arguments which Mr. Pitt had advanced with so much ability and effect, he considered the free connection of the two countries as a submission to slavery, and an abject surrender of independence, on the part of Ireland. Having adverted to the positive rejection of the plan by the Irish Parliament, he read the following Resolutions:

"That no measures can have a tendency to improve and perpetuate the ties of amity and connection, now existing between Great Britain and Ireland, which have not for their basis the manifest, fair, and free consent and approbation of the Parliaments of the two countries.

"That whoever shall endeavour to obtain the appearance of such consent and approbation in either country, by employing the influence of government for the purposes of corruption or intimidation, is an enemy to his Majesty and the constitution."

Lord Hawkesbury supported the original propositions, which were carried, on a division, by 140 votes against 15.—The subject was then postponed to the 7th of February, when some farther discussion took place; on that day Mr. Sheridan moved his two resolutions. They were opposed by Mr. Pitt, who, adverting to the dismission of the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Parnell, (which had been referred to by Mr. Sheridan, as a proof that it was intended to carry the Union by the joint operation of corruption and intimidation) observed, that that minister, having differed from his colleagues on an important fundamental measure of government, had quitted his situation. If many gentlemen were connected together, with the honourable intention of acting for the service of their country, it was necessary, in order to preserve an unity of action, that they should agree in their system; and it was an error to suppose that either the resignation, or even the dismissal, of any one, was a system of corruption. Mr. Grey supported Mr. Sheridan; but on a division, the previous question, moved by Mr. Pitt, was carried by 141 votes, against 25, and, consequently, the resolutions were rejected.

The discussion was renewed, when Mr. St. John asserted, that, as no proof had been adduced to convince the House that Scotland would not have been in an equally prosperous situation if the Union had not taken place, no inference in favour of the proposed measure could be drawn from the pretended consequences of that Union.—No other member of the Opposition, however, attempted to support this line of argument. But Mr. Grey contended, in answer to Mr. Pitt, that,

although the settlement with Ireland in 1782 was not *final*, as to every point, it was a final adjustment as far as it related to the political independence of the Irish legislature. Mr. Dundas, in reply, admitted Mr. Grey's construction of the adjustment of 1782, and allowed that the Irish Parliament was then placed on the same footing of independence in relation to Great Britain, as Scotland was with regard to England before the Union of the two kingdoms. But he undertook to prove, by a reference to the affairs of Scotland, at, and after, the Union, that a similar measure would be productive of similar benefits to Ireland. He assumed as a fact, which could not, indeed, be controverted, that there existed in Ireland, at that time, a spirit of dissension and clamour, of treachery and treason, which menaced the overthrow of the existing government. Conspiracies were so widely extended, their influence was so deeply infused into the minds of the people of Ireland, and the connection between the two countries thereby so much endangered, that, without the immediate and active interference of government, the result might have been a total separation from this kingdom. It was the duty of the King's ministers, viewing Ireland in this perilous situation, to extricate her from the intrigues of the common enemy, by preserving and improving the connection which had so long and so happily subsisted. A more appropriate remedy for the disease, which poisoned the peace and happiness of Ireland, could not, in his apprehension, be imagined, than the incorporating union of the legislatures of the two kingdoms. Mr. Dundas then enforced many of the points urged by Mr. Pitt upon the subject; and ably contended for the superior efficacy of an United Parliament of the three kingdoms, of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to that of three separate and distinct legislatures. He reminded the House, too, that the Irish Parliament, with all its boasted independency, could not give vigour or effect to any one of its acts, without the approving sanction of a King who was resident in this country; whence it was, that even Mr. Grattan, the champion of Irish independence, was obliged to admit, that, "the Parliament of Ireland cannot act independently; for, in all cases of peace or war, it must implicitly follow the Parliament of Great Britain." The Parliament formed by the union, had not deprived the Scotch members of any privilege which

they before enjoyed; on the contrary, it had increased their privileges; for, instead of confining their deliberations to the affairs of Scotland, they were empowered to take part in discussions relative to the affairs of the whole British empire; and the Parliament of Ireland, incorporated on the same principles, would enjoy the same privileges. It was a mis-statement of facts to say, that the Union would destroy the Irish Parliament, for it would place the Irish members in the same situation as the members of the British Parliament.

When the union with Scotland was in contemplation, many melancholy pictures were presented to the public view, in the shape of prophecies. Not the least of these false prophecies was that which was contained in the memorable speech of Lord Belhaven; who, in a kind of prophetic, or rather poetic, vision, foretold the occurrence of many evils, the very reverse of all which had come to pass; while the opposite predictions of Queen Anne, who had represented the most beneficial consequences to both countries as the inevitable result of the measure, had been strictly and fully verified.

In answer to the question, "why not give all these advantages to Ireland without an union, which had been triumphantly asked, Mr. Dundas observed, that without an incorporating union they would have been of no avail, for the strength and resources of the two countries must be consolidated, in order to enable Ireland to reap the full advantages from such concessions. It was from confidence in the strength of government that a communication of capital, and other sources of benefit, could alone arise. Besides, the English government could not, consistently with the duty which they owed to British subjects, make these concessions to Ireland, under its present constitution and separate legislature. They could not be safely granted, until an Imperial Parliament possessed a controul over all the resources of the whole empire, together with the power of applying them to general purposes.

As much stress had been laid, by the Opposition, on what they chose to call the decided reprobation of the measure by the *Parliament* of Ireland, Mr. Dundas very wisely reduced this assertion to its proper stan-

dard, by observing, that two component parts of that Parliament had expressly decided in favour of the union; while the Commons alone had rejected it, and that by a very inconsiderable majority. Under such circumstances, it was idle to talk of this as a solemn decision of Parliament. Sound reason and good sense, he had no doubt, would ultimately prevail; and he could not but augur well of the ultimate success of the measure, when he contemplated the clamour and violence by which the consideration of it had been resisted. The same popular clamour and discontent had been manifested while the union with Scotland was under discussion. Those noblemen and gentlemen who opposed it were hailed as the saviours of the country, while the friends of the union were reviled, insulted, and abused. The Duke of Queensbury, who was one of the commissioners for arranging the provisions of the treaty, narrowly escaped assassination. The union, however, became so popular, in a few years, from experience of its beneficial effects, that, in 1715, when the Pretender talked of dissolving it, the clamour became so great that he was obliged to forego his purpose.

The objections to the measure were again pressed by Mr. Sheridan, who denied that the French had ever built their hopes of success in Ireland on the separation of the two kingdoms; though, had that been the case, it was not possible to account for the conduct of the French general, whose first step, after he landed in Ireland, was to proclaim the independence of that country, by the dissolution of the bond which connected her with England, who sought to allure the people to his standard, by declaring, that he came to give them liberty. He repeated what he had before urged against the competency of the Parliament, and the existence of a sovereignty, *in abeyance,* in the people; and he attempted to illustrate this position, by a reference to the proceedings of the British Convention, in 1688, and by a declaration, that if the people had not such a sovereignty, the present family on the Throne were *Usurpers.* The practice of the Revolution, he said, clearly shewed the force of this argument. When King James the Second abdicated the Throne, the Parliament did not proceed to do any act itself for settling the Crown, but expressly called a Convention, which the Lord Mayor of London, and fifty Commoners, were invited to attend. All the members who had

sate in the Parliaments of Charles the Second were also summoned, and every step that could be taken, in the pressing exigency of affairs, was actually taken to shew, that the appointment to the Crown was *in the people*, and in *them only*.*

Mr. Sheridan must have been very imperfectly acquainted with the history of the Revolution, have most egregiously misunderstood its leading events, or else have grossly misrepresented its most prominent feature, when he adduced the conduct of the convention in 1688 as a proof of the incompetency of the Irish Parliament of 1799; and of an inherent sovereignty in the people. It is not here meant to repeat the arguments which were used, in a former volume,† for the purpose of placing the transactions of the English Revolution in a proper point of view. At that time the Convention, which went the length of altering, limiting, and confining, the established succession to the Throne, derived no authority whatever from the people, and never once appealed to the people for their approbation or consent. Indeed, that Convention possessed no legal character whatever; and so strongly did it feel the singularity of its own situation, that, after it had performed the most important act of legislation, it deemed it expedient to obtain, at least, the shadow of a legal sanction for its act, not, however, by an appeal to the *people*, but by a determination that the King, whom it had itself appointed, should, *by virtue of his own authority*, change the Convention into a Parliament, thus depriving, as it were, the people of their constitutional power of electing their own representatives, and that on an occasion of the utmost importance, and one on which, if ever an idea had subsisted of *a sovereignty in abeyance* being vested in them, it was essentially necessary to call it forth into action. This conversion was performed, as a modern historian has remarked, "that the new settlement might be strengthened by a legal sanction." Without entering into any further detail on the subject, it may suffice to observe, that the whole of this event proves the reverse of

* Annual Register for 1799, p. 223.

† See Vol. I.

what Mr. Sheridan contended it did prove. It demonstrates that even this irregular Convention, not properly elected, nor legally summoned, was fully *competent* to discharge the most important functions of a legislature, by altering the line of succession to the Throne.—And it proves, also, that the Whigs of that day, who took a leading part in the business of the Revolution, never dreamt either of the incompetency of Parliament to perform *any* act of legislation, or of an inherent sovereignty existing in the people at large; because, when having no legal Parliament, and when the Throne was vacant, they did not consider it as necessary to appeal to, or even to consult, the people, but proceeded, without hesitation, to chuse a new Sovereign for them. Their whole conduct contradicts both the principles asserted, the incompetency of Parliament to form an Union, and the exclusive right of the people to sanction the measure, arising out of their imputed sovereignty.

Smollet, indeed, who contended for the illegality of the proceedings at the Revolution, and maintained that the right of altering the Constitution, or of deviating from the established practice of inheritance, in regard to the succession of the Crown, did not rest in the Parliament, accuses the Convention of having exceeded its power, and violated its duty, in not having referred the matter to the people. Indeed, it has since been acknowledged, by Mr. Sheridan himself, that the Revolution was effected *in contradiction to the sentiments of the people*, the majority of whom, he publicly declared, were *Jacobites*, that is, attached to the proscribed House of Stuart. The practice of the Revolution, then, so far from showing the force, only demonstrates the weakness, and inapplicability, of the argument on which Mr. Sheridan so firmly relied, and which he brought that practice to confirm. If, therefore, he were to be pinned down to either the letter or the spirit of his positive assertions, his authority might be cited to prove, that the Revolution of 1688 was achieved against the wishes of the people; and that the House of Brunswick are usurpers!

A gross mistake, under which the opponents of the Union laboured, or rather under which they chose to labour for the sake of the argument,—namely, that the Union was sought for the advantage of England, and not

for the advantage of Ireland, was corrected by Mr. Windham. He observed, that he did not know what England had to wish from such a connection, for she already commanded the whole commerce of the world, and amply possessed the means of defence. Ireland was in a perilous state; but the seeds of the mischief lay in the Constitution itself, which contained no principle by which the ignorance of the people could be removed, or their ferocity suppressed. The proximate, or immediate, evil, however, Mr. Windham asserted, was French principles. This evil had withered the aged, vitiated the youthful, polluted the sources of thought, and given to the whole system of manners and morals a malignity of character, a grossness and laxity, which had rendered the obligations between men nearly nugatory. The cure of the disorders with which Ireland was convulsed, could be found only in the improvement of the manners of the lower orders of the people, by the introduction of British customs and British commerce, which, in his opinion, an Union bid fairer to do than any other means which could possibly be devised. He forbore to enter into a regular discussion of the jacobinical principle of the sovereignty of the people, asserted by Mr. Sheridan, but contented himself with observing, that the people had no political right to change the government, or to resist it, whatever might be the moral right that the people might be allowed speculatively to possess. The right of resistance was not a right acknowledged by, or known to, the British Constitution.

Mr. Grant, (now Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls) proved the non-existence of the contested right, by the *argumentum ad absurdum*. The competency of the two Parliaments, he justly remarked, was no more a question than the competency of their electors, to whom, in fairness, according to the doctrine advanced, it should first be referred. From the electors the question must go to the people at large, who must be assembled, in convention, on Salisbury Plain, and the Curragh of Kildare. But even when there assembled, every individual vote must be collected, and a majority must decide the question. To such ridiculous lengths was this theoretical dogma carried, the fallacy of which he could not but think must be perceived by those who advanced it. But, indeed, the position, if there were any truth in it, must be carried to a still greater

extent; for, if the Sovereignty reside in the whole body of the people, the minority cannot be bound by the majority, unless the free consent of every individual, to abide by the will and decision of the greater number, has been previously ascertained. If the community were divided into ninety-nine parts, and forty-nine were to dissent from any given proposition, of an important political nature, submitted to their decision, while the other fifty parts, constituting a numerical majority, adopted it;—if the latter acted upon their own decision, and exercised the authority which it conferred over the dissenting minority, it would be as much a violation of *their* rights of Sovereignty, whether in *abeyance* or in *exercise*, as any act of a Parliament could be, however chosen, or however constituted. But the slightest reflection will suffice to shew the folly and the absurdity of a pretended right, which, if it existed, it would be morally, if not physically, impossible to exercise. On the next division which took place, the supporters of the Union were one hundred and thirty-one, and its opponents only *nineteen*.

On the 13th of February, all the resolutions having received the final sanction of the Commons, they were sent up to the Peers for their concurrence. After they had been fully discussed, in the Upper House, an address was drawn up, and, having been approved by the Commons, was made the joint address of both Houses; and, as such, was presented to the Throne.

There was one extraordinary circumstance attending the discussions on this important subject. In the debates which occurred, respecting the Union with Scotland, at the beginning of the last century, the Union was opposed only as it was conceived to be injurious to the country to which its opponents belonged. And, at the present moment, the members of the Irish Parliament founded their opposition on the supposed injurious tendency of the measure to their native land. But not so the *English* Opposition; like those universal philanthropists, whom modern philosophy has produced, who are tenderly alive to the interests of every country but their own, they opposed the Union with Ireland, solely on the ground that it would be injurious to *Ireland*,—an objection which, it would seem, might have been left to Irish opponents to press. Its probable

influence on the security and prosperity of Great Britain, whose people, exclusively, they represented, and whose interests, of course, it was their first duty to provide for, appears never to have entered into their view of the question. From whatever motive such extraordinary conduct proceeded, it is perfectly clear, that the members of the English Opposition must yield the palm of patriotism to the Scotch, in the first instance, and to the Irish, in the last. Indeed, their conduct bespoke any thing but a *patriotic* spirit.

During these discussions, in the British Parliament, great pains were taken by the government to reconcile the people of Ireland to the proposed measure of an Union. Mr. Pitt's speech was circulated, with great industry, in every part of the country; and the fixed determination which it expressed to exert himself to the utmost to carry a point which he deemed of vital importance to the interests of both kingdoms, tended materially to increase the public ferment. On the eleventh of February, Colonel Rochford asked Lord Castlereagh, in the Irish House of Commons, whether it was his intention to propose any other measure for restoring the public tranquillity, or whether that task was to be left to the gentlemen of the country. Lord Castlereagh told him that he looked to the important measure of a legislative Union, as the only one which could give to the country permanent tranquillity, prosperity, and happiness; and, on this point, his opinion remained unchanged. On the fifteenth of that month, Lord Corry moved "that the House should resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the state of the nation." The real object of this motion was again to bring into discussion the question of the Union. It was opposed by Lord Castlereagh, on the ground of its having no specific object;—if it was intended to discuss the question of the Union, it was not necessary, for that purpose, to form a committee. He declared, however, that the opinion of the majority of that House, on the subject, together with the difference of opinion which obviously prevailed upon it in the country, was such as to induce government to let the matter sleep for the present; and his Lordship added, that he could not imagine any design so formidable, or so fatal to his country, as an attempt to produce a declaration which it was not in the power of Parliament to make, that the measure

should never again be brought into discussion. Lord Corry's motion was rejected, on a division, by 123 votes against 103.

On the first of June, the Irish Parliament was prorogued, when Marquis Cornwallis informed the two Houses, that the joint address of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain had been laid before his Majesty, accompanied by resolutions, proposing and recommending a complete and entire Union between the two kingdoms, to be established by the mutual consent of their respective Parliaments, and founded upon equal and liberal principles; and that his Majesty would derive the greatest satisfaction from its accomplishment. After the prorogation, the friends and enemies of the measure displayed the most ardent zeal in their endeavours to increase the number of their parliamentary advocates. The Anti-Unionists accused their adversaries of employing all the means of corruption for the attainment of their object; while these, in their turn, reproached the others with having recourse to the meanest artifices for the purpose of procuring signatures to addresses, and of inviting the lowest of the rabble to affix their marks, or to subscribe their names. There was probably some foundation for their respective charges; the minds of men were heated; one side was intent on carrying the measure—the other was resolute in resisting it; and it is not likely, that, in such a state of things, the most scrupulous impartiality, or the most delicate conduct, would be observed on either.

[1800.] These efforts and discussions continued through the remainder of the year 1799. On the 13th of January, 1800, a numerous and respectable body of the Catholics of Dublin assembled at the Royal Exchange, pursuant to public notice, and entered into strong resolutions against the Union. This proceeding rather surprised the Viceroy, whose exertions to conciliate the Catholics had been unremitting from his first arrival in Ireland; nor had they, indeed, been wholly unattended with success, as, in the preceding summer, he had procured addresses in favour of the Union, from the Catholic clergy and their flocks, in the counties of Mayo and Wexford, although that rebellion, the object of which was to produce the separation of the two countries, had there raged with the greatest fury.

On the 15th of January, the Irish Parliament again assembled, when, though no allusion was made to the Union in the Viceroy's speech, Sir Laurence Parsons moved, that his Excellency's speech on the last prorogation of Parliament should be read. After it had been read, he moved, by way of amendment to the address now proposed by Lord Loftus, and seconded by Colonel Crosbie, to introduce the following words, "Humbly to assure his Majesty, that this kingdom is inseparably united with Great Britain, and that it *is* the sentiments, wishes, and real interests, of all his Majesty's subjects, that it shall ever *continue* so united, in the full enjoyment of a free constitution, in support of the honour and dignity of his Majesty's Crown, and in the preservation and advancement of the welfare and prosperity of the whole empire, which blessings, of a free constitution, we owe to the spirited assertion of this kingdom of its birthright;—to a free and independent Parliament resident within it; and to the parental kindness of your Majesty, and the liberality of the British Parliament, in ratifying the same, in the year 1782, and which we have, at all times, felt, and do now particularly feel, it our bounden duty to maintain." This motion gave rise to a long and animated discussion, which lasted the whole night, and till nine the following morning, when it was rejected by a majority of *forty-two*, ninety-six members having voted for it, and one hundred and thirty-eight against it; so that it was evident a great change of sentiment had taken place since the prorogation, in the preceding summer, on the subject of the Union; though, possibly, the enemies of that measure might have weakened their force by the injudicious, impolitic, and most irregular mode of bringing forward the discussion, instead of waiting till the measure was fairly before them. It was not long, however, before such an opportunity presented itself; for, on the fifth of February, Lord Castlereagh delivered a message from the Lord Lieutenant, who informed the House that he had it in command from his Majesty to lay before them the resolutions of the British Parliament, proposing and recommending an Union between the two kingdoms, and requesting them to take the same into consideration. In a very long and argumentative speech, opened with a reference to the decision of Parliament in the last session, and the change of opinion which reflection had since produced in the public mind, his Lordship unfolded all the advantages which, in his view of the measure, it was

calculated to communicate to Ireland. He proposed eight resolutions, which contained the substance of those which had been voted by the British Parliament. By the fourth of these it was settled, that four Lords spiritual, of Ireland, by rotation of sessions, and twenty-eight Lords temporal, of Ireland, elected for life by the Peers of Ireland, should be the number to sit and vote, on the part of Ireland, in the House of Lords, in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. One hundred members were proposed, as a proper number to represent the people of Ireland, in the House of Commons, of the Imperial Parliament. The fifth article declared, that the churches of the two kingdoms should be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called, 'the United Church of England and Ireland,' and that the doctrine, worship, and discipline of the said United Church should remain in full force for ever; and that the continuance and preservation of the said United Church should be, for ever, held as a fundamental article of the Union. In order to preserve a fair proportion of commercial advantages, it was deemed necessary to establish certain countervailing duties;—a necessity much to be lamented, as on such an occasion as the Union of two independent countries, long allied to each other by the closest ties, and speaking the same language, it were much to be desired, that the inhabitants of both should be placed on perfectly the same footing, and so much identified, to all intents and purposes, as if they inhabited different portions of the same island. Each country was to defray its own national debt; but, after the expiration of twenty years, it was proposed, that the public expence should be divided into seventeen parts, fifteen of which were to be borne by Great Britain, and two by Ireland.

In adverting to that part of the propositions which related to the parliamentary representation of Ireland, Lord Castlereagh observed, that the number of representatives was fixed, on a just principle, in reference to the respective population, and future contributions, of the two countries. As many boroughs would be disfranchised by the new regulations, it would be proper, he said, to make compensation to such individuals as might be injured by the loss of them prescriptive privileges. This was one of the most delicate, and the most difficult, subjects which could possibly be submitted to discussion, in a House of Commons; though

possibly less so in the Irish, than in the British, Parliament. It would be a woeful waste of words to enter into any argument for the purpose of shewing that no man possesses the right, *constitutionally* speaking, to send a member to Parliament, and, still less, can he be allowed to derive any pecuniary emolument from the possession of an interest or an influence, the exercise of which places him in the same situation, in point of fact, as if he possessed such a right; and it would necessarily follow, from this statement, that no compensation could be due to him from the public for the loss of that which the constitution does not permit him to enjoy. It would betray, however, a consummate ignorance of human nature, to expect that men will resign an advantage, call it a *prescriptive privilege*, or what we will, which they feel they possess, and which they know they enjoy, without an adequate compensation for the loss of it. If, then, the Union were really a measure essential to the safety and prosperity of the empire; and if, (as was undoubtedly the case) it could not be carried, without making such compensation, it became a fair question for consideration, whether it would be politic, prudent, and justifiable, to propose it? Without adopting the jesuitical principle, that the end justifies the means, or the still more unchristian notion, that men may do evil that good may come of it; it may, perhaps, be found in political operations, that measures must always have a reference to the actual state of society, at the time when they are suggested; and, in respect of the compensation proposed in the present instance for the loss of the power to return members to Parliament, it may be observed, that if the compensation itself were not defensible on strict principles of political morality, it might nevertheless be justified, on the consideration that it would strike at the root of the vicious practices to which it related. Indeed, Lord Castlereagh seemed to have had this idea in his mind, when he remarked, that by the Union, the question of Parliamentary Reform would be superseded, as the present plan was a reform of the most popular kind.

With regard to the church, another topic of great importance, and of great delicacy also, he expressed his conviction of the insecurity of the Irish Protestant church, if it should continue in a state of separation from the church of England; but, in the event of an Union,

he had no doubt that the present ecclesiastical establishment, founded on the Protestant ascendency, would be stable and permanent. The Romanists, who, trusting to the great superiority of their numbers, were continually urging claims against the minority, would be checked in their confidence and forwardness, and would exhibit fewer marks of jealousy and mistrust; and their pretensions would be temperately discussed by an Imperial Parliament, at a time when local circumstances would cease to inflame.

This certainly was one of the strongest arguments in favour of the Union, which could be pressed upon an Irish Protestant. As soon as the Union should take place, the people of both countries would become one people, and any claim to be preferred by the Irish Catholics, in reference to their numbers, must be considered with a view to the united population of the whole empire. That argument, then, in behalf of such claims, which was, at all times, more plausible than solid, would lose its force and application; for the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, taking them at the highest computation, would not form one-fourth part of the people of the United Kingdom; whereas, in Ireland they amounted, according to some to one half, and acording to others, to about three-fifths of the population.*

* As great difference of opinion, or rather of *statement*, has prevailed respecting the relative numbers of Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, I shall extract the observations of an intelligent writer on the subject, who had the best opportunity for acquiring accurate information.

"Sir William Petty, in his 'Political Anatomy,' states the proportion of Protestants and Romanists in Ireland to be, as three to eight, in the year 1672, sixteen years before the revolution, so that, at that time, the Irish Protestants amounted to more than one-third of the inhabitants of the country. In the year 1732, an accurate enumeration was made, by order of government, of all the families in Ireland, distinguishing the Protestant families from the Romish, in each province, and a calculation was made from thence, of the numbers of the Protestant and Romish inhabitants of Ireland; it was printed in Dublin in the year 1730, and re-printed in 1788. It appears from that calculation, that, in the year 1732, the number of Protestant inhabitants was, to the Romish, as one to two and a half. Dr. Burke, Romish titular Bishop of Ossory, wrote a book in Latin, which he entitled, 'Hibernia Dominicana; it was printed at Brussels in the year 1762; and he particularly states, that an actual enumeration was made of the numbers of Protestants and Romanists in Ireland,

It is here necessary to observe, that no pledge or promise, whatever, was made, either by Mr. Pitt, or by his authority, directly, or indirectly, to the Romanists of Ireland, that the few restrictions under which they still laboured, and forming the only bars to a full participation of political power, should be removed, if they would give their consent to the Union. No other prospect, and no other hopes, were held out to them than what might be founded on the general position advanced by Mr. Pitt, in his own speeches, and by Lord Castlereagh, his confidential agent in Ireland, in all the business relating to the Union, that the claims of the Catholics would be canvassed with more impartiality, and decided upon with more coolness, in an Imperial Senate, than they could be by an Irish Parliament, which must of

in the year 1731, and there were found to be then in the kingdom, seven hundred thousand four hundred and fifty-three Protestants; and one million three hundred and nine thousand, seven hundred and sixty-eight Romanists; so that the proportion of Romanists and Protestants was not, in the year 1731, quite two to one, according to Dr. Burke. It is very likely that the Romish bishop had very accurate information of the relative numbers, perhaps better than that which could be deduced from the documents stated in the pamphlet, containing the calculation made in 1732. Dr. Burke also states, that the proportion had much increased on the Protestant side, between the year 1731 and the year 1762, by the operation of the Popery code, and the Protestant Charter Schools, and he makes grievous complaints of the increase of heretics, as he styles Protestants. The Popery code continued in full vigour till the year 1776, and its operation, together with the Charter Schools, must have increased the proportion on the Potestant side. There is a modern document which must have great weight in this question, taken from the number of beggars admitted into the House of Industry in Dublin, for a course of six years, beginning with the year 1784, and ending with the year 1789; and their respective religious persuasions.

"This House of Industry is a general receptacle for all beggars who flock into Dublin from all parts of Ireland, for there are no poor-rates in Ireland. Divine service is performed separately in the receptacle for persons of the two persuasions, and chaplains are retained for each by the corporation.

'Numbers admitted.

	Protestants.	Romanists.
In 1784	696	1870
1785	[illegible]	2435
1786	[illegible]	2912
1787	[illegible]	3341
1788	854	3643
1789	798	3615
Total	6403	17,816

necessity, be subject to the influence of local considerations that could not possibly operate in England. If any letter or paper, was circulated in Ireland conveying a different impression to the minds of the Catholics, I am warranted to assert, in the most positive manner, that it was composed and issued without the authority or knowledge of Mr. Pitt, and must have proceeded either from a strange misconception, or from a misguided zeal, on the part of the Viceroy. The fact here stated must be known to every Member of the British Cabinet, at that period, who would not fail to correct any mistatement on a point of such importance. Mr. Pitt, indeed, did himself entertain hopes, that the Union would be productive of such a change in the public mind as would remove every objection to those ultimate concessions which the Romanists, who would never be satisfied while there should be any thing left to grant on the one side, and to acquire on the other, would not fail to urge. But he knew very well that, unless this change was produced, and the concessions were sanctioned with the free and full approbation of the public, they could not be attended with those national advantages, the certainty of obtaining which could alone justify

"The Romish beggars admitted, during a course of six years, did not exceed the Protestant beggars in the proportion of three to one. The house of industry is filled with the lowest class; and as the property in the hands of Irish Protestants is to that in the hands of Irish Romanists as *thirty-nine* to *one*, the proportion of beggars on the side of Irish Romanists to those on the Protestant side must vastly exceed the proportion of Romanists and Protestants in the nation at large. Besides, although wandering beggars flock to Dublin from all parts of the kingdom, the fewest certainly come from the northern counties, which abound most with Protestants; for, having a flourishing manufacture, these countries send forth fewest beggars. From all these documents it may be fairly concluded, that Irish Romanists exceed Irish Protestants in number throughout the whole kingdom in no greater proportion than that of two to one, perhaps in a much less.

"The Romish Convention in Dublin, in the year 1792, first broached the positions, that Irish Romanists exceeded Irish Protestants, in the proportion of three to one; and that the gross number of the inhabitants amounted to four millions; consequently that the Romanists amounted to three millions. They never produced any document on which they pretended to found a calculation; however, they then admitted that Irish Protestants amounted to one million. It is remarkable, that this Convention never scrupled to advance and publish any falsehood whatever, which they thought might be of advantage to their cause; of which their petition to his Majesty is a very prominent instance."

the Parliament in granting them. And, however sanguine his own hopes might be, he certainly never gave the Romanists any other encouragement to expect their fulfilment than what fairly arose out of the consideration before noticed.

The most violent opposer of the Union was Mr. Grattan, whose speech was distinguished chiefly for boldness of assertion, wildness of declamation, and virulence of abuse. He did not blush to affirm, in the debate, on the first day of the present Session, that "any little Minister, any petty lawyer, any profligate pander of power, may tear the edifice of the Constitution to the ground." The Union, he insisted would be "No Union," although he told the House "it will be the exclusion of your people, and the extinction of yourselves." In a style of eloquence, peculiar to himself, he devoted the British Ministers to "an *immortality* of *eternal* infamy." This singular anathema he extended to the Irish Parliament, in case they should be bold enough not to abide by his opinion. "If you surrender your Parliament," said he to them, "you surrender yourselves up to eternal infamy, and your country to irrevocable destruction." Well might another member ask: "Shall I call this language arrogant?—or shall I term it insulting? I do assert, and I will maintain, that it is empty, noisy, delusive, declamation, calculated to frighten children, or to awe lunatics; but certainly not adapted to engage the attention, still less to convince the understanding, of a rational being. Sir, I feel a very painful mortification, when I consider, that there could exist, but for one moment, in any breast, the expectation that the Irish House of Commons could be moved by such a caricature of energy and eloquence. Let us reflect but for an instant on what foundation this denunciation of eternal infamy, is built. Truly it rests merely upon the—"I say" of the honourable gentleman. He may say, and repeat it, till the shores of Waterford, of Cork, and of Limerick, echo back the sound! but I say, Sir, that one whisper of testimony and truth shall accomplish more than the thunder of a thousand orators."

* *A Reply to a Speech delivered in the Irish House of Commons, on Wednesday, January 15, 1800, by Mr. Grattan, on the subject of a Legislative Union.*—By an Absentee.

The same tone and temper were exhibited by Mr. Grattan, in every debate on this subject. His violence exposed him to an attack from Mr. Corry, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which produced one of those absurd appeals to the sword, which, unfortunately, are more prevalent in Ireland than in any other country. On a division, the resolutions proposed by Lord Castlereagh were adopted, by one hundred and fifty-eight votes against one hundred and fifteen. It is to be remarked that, in the course of this discussion, the Members who opposed the Union uniformly insisted, that the settlement, or adjustment, of the Irish Constitution in 1782, was supposed to be final and immutable; but it could not escape observation, that the Ponsonbys,* Mr. Grattan, and others of the same party, had frequently proposed, between the years 1792 and 1798, measures of reform which, if adopted, would have effected a complete change in that Constitution. Many of the Members who voted for the Union were, on their return from the House, grossly insulted by the populace; on which account a guard

* That the reader may be enabled to form some idea of the style or character of the speeches of those patriotic members, who had been the steady supporters of administration, until they choose so far to imitate the conduct of naval mutineers as to sign a *Round Robin*, in the administration of Lord Buckingham, I present him with a short extract from a speech of Mr. George Ponsonby, on the 15th of May, 1799, in which he introduced the question of the Union, although the subject of discussion had not the smallest connection with, or reference to, it.

"Sir, I have not been in the House to hear all that as been said, but I am shocked, and afflicted, to understand from the honourable Member who spoke last, at the other side of the House, that all the gentlemen around me *have lost their senses*, and *are all gone mad*. This affects me extremely, because I hope for their sober concurrence on a future day, when a measure directed to the ruin of this country shall again be discussed in this House. But I am concerned to find, by the speech of the honourable Member opposite to me, that I must look to a *lucid interval* for such concurrence. He says the Parliament are for an Union,—that the people are for an Union, and yet *the Parliament is to excite the people to a rebellion*, if Parliament should be so good as to comply with their wishes and give them an Union; but this is not the extent of our calamity, for I find a great part of the Community has gone mad as well as this House; for, notwithstanding the great number of public declarations against the measure of an Union, those who had thus declared themselves are now in a fit of insanity, mad for the accomplishment of the project. It is impossible, Mr. Speaker, to bear up against these occasional and national fits of insanity.—I feel it dangerous to trust myself in the House, lest I should be bitten and go mad myself also."

of horse was afterwards stationed near the House to prevent a repetition of similar outrages;—a precaution by no means superfluous, in the ferment which then prevailed.

It is not surprising that the Irish House of Commons should have been accused of unsteadiness and inconsistency, in thus adopting a measure in one Session which they had rejected the Sesion before. But, without entering into the merits of this charge, it is but just to observe, that in respect of the Union they stood upon very different grounds from those by which their conduct was to be tried, on the question of granting the elective franchise, and other privileges, to the Romanists. In the latter case, the question had been often, and deliberately discussed; it had been rejected by a very large and decisive majority, and no new circumstances had intervened in the period which occurred between their peremptory rejection, and their unqualified adoption, of the same measure, by a majority which amounted nearly to unanimity! But, in the former case, though the question could not be said to be perfectly new to the House, yet had it not undergone any parliamentary discussion previous to the Session of 1799; and it was then taken up with great heat, and rejected without even an examination of the principle on which it was to be proposed, much less of any of those details which could alone enable a deliberative and legislative assembly to form a competent judgment upon it; it was first carried by a single vote, and then rejected by a majority of *five* only. It was attended, too, with another circumstance which still increased the difference between this case and that of the repeal of the penal laws against Romanists. On the first divison, in 1799, only two hundred and thirteen Members voted, one hundred and four for the Union, and one hundred and nine against it; whereas on the present occasion, no less than two hundred and seventy-five voted, one hundred and fifty-eight for the Union, and one hundred and fifteen against it. So that, for any thing which appears on the face of the proceeding, no change of sentiment in the Members of the House, who voted on the question, had taken place; for, although the advocates of the measure had increased, by fifty four, the number of its opponents had not

diminished; on the contrary, it was greater by eleven on the last, than it was on the first division.

The Minister having thus carried his propositions in the Lower House, they were sent to the Upper House, where, on the tenth of February, they underwent a long and serious discussion. They were moved by the chancellor, Lord Clare, who entered into an exhibition of strong facts, and a train of cogent arguments, in order to prove, that the late rebellion, and all the treasonable plots and combinations which preceded it for some years, had arisen, in a great measure, from the seditious speeches of a set of factitious demagogues in Parliament, who possessed ostentatious talents, but were destitute of judgment, principle, and property. He represented these men as making a trade of working on popular delusion, with a view to kindle strife and turbulence, that they might be bought off by the government. While seats in Parliament were attained by such mercenary adventurers, Ireland would be kept in a constant storm, and the passions of a savage and barbarous populace would be raised and directed against the opulent and respectable part of the nation. The first division on the question was seventy-five for the Union, and twenty-six against it. And the various resolutions were carried through the Lords by a large majority.

Several divisions took place in the Commons, in all of which the majority remained with the Minister. The resolution respecting the parliamentary representation, on which it was natural to expect the greatest opposition, was carried, on the 10th of March, by a majority of nineteen. On the 13th of that month, the Opposition, headed by Sir John Parnell, made another effort to impede the progress of the measure, by moving an address to the King, requesting him to dissolve the present Parliament, and to convoke another before the final arrangement of the Union. In the course of this debate, which lasted till four in the morning, the Solicitor-General accused Mr. Saurin, a Barrister, who spoke strongly in favour of an appeal to the people, of "unfurling the bloody flag of rebellion;" while Mr. Egan, on the other hand, charged Ministers with having "unfurled the flag of prostitution and corruption!" After much crimination and recrimination of

this kind, the House divided, when the motion was rejected by 150 votes against 104.

After all the resolutions had been discussed, and digested, by the Committee of the whole House, they were reported on the 21st of March, when it was agreed that they should be carried to the Upper House by Lord Castlereagh, and the concurrence of the Peers be desired. On the 27th, the Lords informed the Commons, that they had adopted the resolutions with certain amendments, and these having received the sanction of the Commons, it was resolved to present an address to his Majesty, expressive of the cordial approbation of the Parliament of Ireland of a legislative union; and stating that they considered the resolutions of the two Houses of the British Parliament as wisely calculated to form the basis of such a settlement; that they had, therefore, adopted them as their guide, and now laid before his Majesty the resolutions to which they had agreed, and which, if approved by the British Parliament, they were willing to ratify and confirm.

This address was communicated by his Majesty to the British Parliament on the second of April; and on the 21st of that month, the subject underwent a full discussion in the House of Commons, when Mr. Pitt proposed, that the resolutions voted by the Irish Parliament should be adopted by that House. He again entered, on this occasion, into an explanation of the principle on which the measure was founded, into a consideration of the advantages which it was calculated to afford to both countries, and into an examination of the details of the various resolutions which had received the sanction of the Irish Legislature. Alluding to the question of Parliamentary Reform, which some had thought should accompany this measure, he made an appeal to the candour of every man, whether if, as was generally admitted, the Union was itself a measure of great difficulty, it would be prudent or safe, to involve it in a question of the greatest perplexity, of the most embarrassing nature, and attended with fatal consequences, as to our internal interests? He declared, that if any thing could throw a doubt upon the question of Union,—if any thing could, in his mind, counterbalance the advantages that must result from it, it would be the necessity of disturbing the representation of England; but fortunately, no such necessity

existed. Mr. Pitt took this opportunity of stating, without reserve, his present sentiments on the subject of Parliamentary Reform.

"In stating this, Sir," said he, "I have not forgotten what I have myself formerly said, and sincerely felt, upon this subject; but I know that all opinions must necessarily be subservient to times and circumstances; and that man who talks of his consistency, merely because he holds the same opinion for ten or fifteen years, when the circumstances under which that opinion was originally formed are totally changed, is a slave to the most idle vanity. Seeing all that I have seen since the period to which I allude; considering how little chance there is of that species of Reform to which alone I looked, and which is as different from the modern schemes of Reform, as the latter are from the constitution; seeing that where the greatest changes have taken place the most dreadful consequences have ensued, and which have not been confined to that country where the change took place, but have spread their malignant influence in every quarter of the globe, and shaken the fabric of every government; seeing that in this general shock the Constitution of Great Britain has alone remained pure and untouched in its vital principles; when I see that it has resisted all the efforts of Jacobinism, sheltering itself under the pretence of a love of liberty; when I see that it has supported itself against the open attacks of its enemies, and against the more dangerous reforms of its professed friends; that it has defeated the unwearied machinations of France, and the no less persevering efforts of Jacobins in England; and that, during the whole of the contest, it has uniformly maintained the confidence of the people of England; I say, Sir, when I consider all these circumstances, I should be ashamed of myself if any former opinions of mine could now induce me to think that the form of representation which, in such times as the present, has been found amply sufficient for the purpose of protecting the interests, and securing the happiness, of the people, should be idly and wantonly disturbed, from any love of experiment, or any predilection for theory. Upon this subject, Sir, I think it right to state the inmost thoughts of my mind; I think it right to declare my most decided opinion, that, even if the times were proper for experiments, any, even the slightest, change in such a constitution must be considered as an evil."

So much obloquy have been cast on Mr. Pitt, for an imputed inconsistency of conduct on this question of Reform, that it is an act of justice due to his memory to record the reasons for that change of sentiment, out of which that imputation arose. Let these opinions be examined with candour and attention, and they will be found to contain indisputable proofs of political wisdom, of a manly and independent mind, unfettered by prejudice, ever open to conviction, and opposing the practical lessons of experience to the dogmatical theory of the schools. It will be observed, that Mr. Pitt here grounds his abandonment of *the only species of Reform* to which he ever looked, on the improbability of obtaining it;—a circumstance to which a statesman will ever pay due regard. It is hoped that, after this firm and candid explanation, no man will be so bold, or so unjust, as to renew the charge of inconsistency against him on this subject, without first *demonstrating* the fallacy, or the insufficiency, of his arguments, in defence of his conduct.

As much had been said on the increased influence which the Crown would acquire by the reduction of the Irish members to one hundred.* Mr. Pitt declared, that some provision ought to be made upon the subject. He felt this sentiment as strongly as any man; but it was impossible to provide against it by an article of the Union, to be binding upon the United Parliament, because it had been found, by experience, that the number of offices to be held by members must always remain at the discretion of Parliament, to be regulated, from time to time, as circumstances might require. He thought nothing could be more fair than that which he had to propose on this point, namely, that no more than twenty of the Irish members of the Imperial Parliament should hold places during pleasure; and if it should so happen that there should be a greater number of this description, elected to the first Parliament, then those who had last accepted places should vacate their

* It was urged by Lord Holland, in the House of Peers, as an objection to the Union, that it would alter the representation of the country; an innovation which, by increasing the influence of the Crown, would, in his opinion, have the most unhappy effects on the country. This forms a solitary exception to the observation before made, that the objections started to this measure were grounded on the supposed injury which it would do to *Ireland*, without any reference to its bad effects upon *England*.

seats;—this upon the whole, he thought, would obviate every objection that could be made in point of principle.

Mr. Pitt then took a view of those resolutions which related to the commerce of the country, all of which he proved to be founded on the liberal principle of mutual accomodation and advantage. He expressed his satisfaction that the Parliament and people of Ireland had, at length, been led to regard the measure in its true point of view. He did not, however, mean to say, that there were, among the intelligent part of the public, none who were against the Union;—he knew there were, and he knew, too, that, in a question involving so many interests, the same thing would, to different individuals, appear in different points of view;—hence arose a diversity of opinion. This had been the case in almost every thing which had ever been argued, and must be so in every thing which became an object of contention; but, after all, it was clear that the Parliament and people of Ireland were in a situation to judge of the measure. It was not because the measure was not vigorously opposed, the friends of the Union had had to stand against the threats of popular violence—against the enemies of the government, under the conduct of Protestants—against the violent and inflamed spirit and fierce attack of the Irish Catholics—and against the aggregate of all evils, the spirit of all mischief, the implacable opposition, and determined hostility, of furious jacobinism; they had to meet the inflamed passions of disappointed ambition, which, under the name and pretext of superior patriotism, under colour of jealousy for the freedom of others, under affected tenderness for landed interest, affected care for commercial welfare, would reduce the State to ruin, because those whom it affected were not its rulers. Notwithstanding all this opposition, the parties engaged in it had not been able to prove any thing, but that their own fury was ungovernable, their predictions were chimerical, and their hopes delusive. The Friends of the measure had had to stand against the principles which fomented, and, unhappily, inflamed, the late Irish rebellion;—they had to contend against the active and mischievous efforts of the friends and champions of jacobinism, to whom the tendency of the Union to preserve order, was a sufficient reason for hating it, because, any thing like order was an extinction of their hopes. The country had seen, that the wisdom of the Parliament, and the good sense

of the people of Ireland, had prevailed over this host of foes; it had seen the friends who supported, and the enemies who opposed, this great national object; and was enabled, by all that had happened, to judge pretty accurately of the sentiments of both, with their tendency or effect on the fate of the British empire.

As soon as Mr. Pitt's motion for adopting the Irish resolutions was put, Mr. Grey moved, as an amendment, "that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he will be graciously pleased to direct his Ministers to suspend all proceedings on the Irish Union, till the sentiments of the Irish people, respecting that measure can be ascertained."

In support of this strange proposition, which went to establish a difference between the sentiments of the people and those of their representatives, which, though it may certainly exist, in point of fact, the constitution does not admit, and which, therefore, cannot form the ground of a legislative measure, Mr. Grey pressed all the arguments against the measure which the Irish Opposition had urged. He asserted, that the petitions in Ireland, in favour of the Union, had been obtained by clandestine and fraudulent means; and applied to the transaction Buckingham's description of his attempt to persuade the citizens of London to accept the Third Richard for their king.

"Some followers of mine own,
At lower end o' the hall, hurl'd up their caps,
And some ten voices cried, God save King Richard!
And thus I took the 'vantage of these few—
Thanks, gentle citizens and friends, Quoth I;
This general applause, and cheerful shout,
Argues your wisdom, and your love to Richard."

In reply to these and other observations, Mr. Pitt remarked, that when the Irish Parliament had rejected the Union, the year before, the Opposition were disposed to pay the greatest deference to their decision, and thought it amply sufficient to induce the British Parliament to abandon the point altogether; but now, that the voice of the Irish

Parliament was in favour of the measure, it was no longer deserving of attention, but an appeal to the people was absolutely necessary. Hence it was evident, that it was their own opinions, and not those of the public, which those gentlemen wished to make the rule of conduct to the legislature. Mr. Pitt declared his dissent from the doctrine now broached. There might be occasions, but they would ever be few, when an appeal to the people was the just mode of proceeding on important subjects. The present, however, was not a fit moment to appeal to the people of Ireland, when, if they did so, the whole economy of our legislative system, the customary proceedings, in cases which involved the rights and liberties of the people, the jurisprudence of the country, would be thrown into confusion and all this at a moment when the Parliament was about to effect that which it had declared to be essential to the peace of Ireland, and to the safety of the empire. The ground on which this appeal was pressed was remarkable. It arose from a wish to ascertain the sentiments of the people of Ireland, which were assumed beforehand to be adverse to the Union. If this were believed, it behoved those who made the assertion to adduce proofs in support of it. But Mr. Pitt declared, he should adhere to the opinion of the Parliament of Ireland, and would not, therefore, consent to a convocation of primary assemblies, and of bodies of men, to vote addresses on French principles, arrayed, as they would be, against legislative authority, and constitutional freedom. But, even if the people were resorted to, who would take the expression of their opinion, given amidst tumult, in the fury of passion? Who would assume that opinion as fit to be adopted for the rule of conduct in a great political undertaking?— He shewed that the Opposition had little respect for the opinion which they now professed to revere, since, when the voice of the people had sanctioned the conduct of his Majesty's government, they retired from the House of Commons, chose to neglect their duty to their constituents, to desert the post of honour, or of danger, because that conduct was approved by the people. Such, then, was the fallacy of the general opinions of those honourable persons, who, added to the weight of their own very grave authority, then desired the House to resort to public meetings, there to collect the sentiments of a mixed populace. When he considered how defective must be any opinion that was the result of

an appeal to a people wholly influenced by a few factious demagogues, Mr. Pitt said he could not adopt it as a rule of action. Mr. Grey's amendment was rejected by 236 votes against 30. After the resolutions had been separately considered, and some few amendments made, Mr. Pitt moved, on the 5th of May, "That an address be presented to his Majesty, humbly begging leave to acquaint his Majesty, that, in conformity to his Majesty's gracious message, laying before them the resolutions of the Lords and Commons of Ireland, they had proceeded to resume the consideration of the important subject of a legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland; that it was with unspeakable satisfaction they had observed the conformity of the said resolutions to those principles which they had humbly submitted to his Majesty in the last session of Parliament, as calculated to form the basis of such a settlement. That, with the few alterations and additions which they had found it necessary to suggest, they considered these resolutions as fit to form the articles of Union between Great Britain and Ireland. And, if these alterations and additions should be approved of by the two Houses of the Parliament of Ireland, they were ready to confirm and ratify these articles, in order that the same might be established for ever, by the mutual consent of both Parliaments. That they offered up to his Majesty their humble congratulations on the near prospect of the accomplishment of a work, which his Majesty, as the common father of his people, had justly declared to be so near his heart, concurring with his Houses of Parliament in Ireland, on the full conviction that, by incorporating the legislature, and consolidating the resources, of the two kingdoms, we should increase the power and stability of the British empire, and, at the same time, contribute, in the most effectual manner, to the improvement of the commerce, and the preservation of the liberties, of his Majesty's subjects in Ireland."

This address having passed the House of Commons, was communicated to the Lords, in a conference, on the ninth of May. The Lords themselves had previously made some slight alterations in the resolutions which the Commons had approved; and the address, now receiving their sanction, was made the joint address of the two houses, and was presented, as such, to the King. His Majesty, in his answer, expressed the

greatest satisfaction at their proceedings, and engaged to communicate, without delay, to his Parliament of Ireland, the sentiments and declarations contained in the address, " The disposition which had been manifested by his Parliaments, in both kingdoms, afforded his Majesty the best pledge of the speedy and prosperous conclusion of the great measure of the Union; an event to which he looked forward with the most anxious expectation, as tending, above all others, to secure and perpetuate the happiness of all his subjects."

The resolutions were accordingly transmitted to Ireland; in a short time they received the final sanction of the Parliaments of both kingdoms, and, afterwards, the royal fiat, on the 2d of July. Thus, at length was this most important regulation placed on the statute book of the realm. It required the clear and comprehensive mind of Mr. Pitt to perceive the necessity, and to foresee the advantages, of an incorporate Union; and all his bold and enterprizing spirit to persevere in the means necessary for its accomplishment, in opposition to difficulties which, to many, appeared insurmountable, and to a torrent of prejudice which it seemed impracticable to stem. It was the observation of one who well understood the real interests of the British empire, and whose learning, sagacity, and wisdom, rendered him not only an ornament to the country which gave him birth, but an honour to human nature, that, " If England, Scotland, and Ireland were united, it would be such a trefoil, as no other sovereign wears in his crown."*

* Lord Bacon.

CHAPTER XL.

Transactions in Egypt after the battle of the Nile—Means adopted by Buonaparté for securing his conquest—Blasphemous proclamations an essential part of his *moral* artillery—Converts the koran of Mahomet into a code of Jacobinism—Holds a *divan*, and establishes an Institute at Grand Cairo—Insurrection in that city—Buonaparté resolves to besiege St. John of Acra—Jaffa taken by assault—Deliberate murder of three thousand eight hundred Turkish prisoners within a mile of the town—Reasons assigned for this barbarous deed—Orders five hundred and eighty of his own sick soldiers to be poisoned in the hospital at Jaffa—Noble conduct of a French physician on that occasion—Blasphemous letter of Buonaparté to Ghezzar Pacha, Governor of Acra—Arrival of Sir Sidney Smith with some British vessels at Acra—The French lay siege to the place—Their train of artillery taken by the British ships—Various ineffectual assaults on the town—Gallant conduct of the British Admiral—The French make some practicable breaches in the walls—Various ineffectual assaults on the town—Strong mark of Ghezzar's attachment to the English—A Turkish reinforcement arrives—The Turks, led on by the English, repulse the French on all sides—Treachery of Buonaparté—He abandons the siege and returns to Egypt—Prefers a charge of cruelty against Sir Sidney Smith—Its falsehood demonstrated—Communication between Buonaparté and Tippoo Sultaun—Projects of Tippoo for the extirpation of the British from India—His treaty with the French—Wisdom, vigour, and decision, displayed by Lord Mornington, Governor-General of India, in counteracting the machinations of the enemy—Entrance of the British army into the Mysore—Capture of Seringapatam—Death of Tippoo—Buonaparté deserts his post in Egypt, and returns to France—State of the French army at the period of his departure—Falsehoods contained in his valedictory address to his troops—His Letter to Kleber—Military operations on the Continent of Europe—Relative force of the hostile armies—The French enter Suabia without any previous declaration of war—Military operations in Germany—In the country of the Grisons—And in the Tyrol—The Archduke Charles compels General Jourdan to evacuate Suabia—The French expelled from the Grisons—Actions in Switzerland—The Archduke attacks the French position before Zurich—Desperate engagement—Massena evacuates the post—Operations in Italy—Successive defeats of the French, under Scherer, by Generals Kaim and Kray—Battle near Verona, gained by the Austrians—Retreat of the French beyond the Mincio—Arrival of Marshal Suworrow, with 20,000 Russians—Defeats the French on the Adda—The allies enter Milan—Moreau, who has succeeded Scherer, falls back upon Turin—Loss of the French from the commencement of the campaign—Moreau's head quarters at Coni—The allies enter Turin and besiege the citadel—General Macdonald, with the army of Naples,

arrives in Tuscany—Endeavours to form a junction with Moreau—Is defeated with great loss, and returns to Tuscany—Force of the allies at this period—Macdonald again evacuates Tuscany, and joins Moreau—Surrender of Alexandria to the allies—Mantua capitulates—The French, under Joubert, seek to raise the siege of Tortona—Battle of Novi—Suworrow attacks the French in a most advantageous position—Is repulsed three different times—General Joubert killed—Skilful manœuvre of General Melas—The French position carried—Great loss sustained by the French in this action—Suworrow departs for Switzerland—Arrival of General Korsakow and a Russian army in Switzerland—Strange conduct of the Archduke Charles—Mysterious policy of the Austrian cabinet—The Archduke leaves Switzerland, at the moment when his success was certain—The Russians and Austrians defeated by Massena—General Hoetze killed—The Russians, under Korsakow, evacuate Switzerland—Perilous situation of Suworrow—Massena marches against him—Suworrow defeats the French in different actions—Makes good his retreat to Germany—Object of the campaign frustrated by the unprincipled conduct of Austria—British expedition against Holland—The first division of the army lands at the Helder—Surrender of the Dutch fleet to Admiral Mitchell—Arrival of the Russian Auxiliaries in Holland—The Duke of York takes the command of the allied force—The Allies advance—Defeat the French and Dutch in different engagements—Misconduct of the Russians, in two of the actions—The Allies resolve to evacuate the country—Reflections on their situation—Their means of obtaining the most favourable terms—Convention concluded with the French General—Its conditions considered—The British troops withdrawn from Holland—The Dutch colony of Surinam surrendered to the British.

[1799-1800.] While Mr. Pitt was intent on consolidating the strength of the empire, by internal regulations, equally calculated to promote its present security, and to ensure its future prosperity, the distant shores of Egypt and of Syria were destined to witness the triumph of the British arms. After the destruction of the French fleet, at the battle of the Nile, the French army was left with little hope of receiving any farther reinforcements from Europe. The efforts of Buonaparté, therefore, were directed to secure, in the first instance, the means of subsistence, and, in the next, to preserve the health of his troops, and to augment their numbers, by enrolling in his service such of the young natives, of different descriptions, as he could persuade to enlist under his banners. After he had collected the remains of the crews of the different ships which had been destroyed at the mouth of the Nile, he found himself at the head of an army of nearly forty thousand men. He began, in order to attach the people to his cause, by playing off what has been, not unaptly, called his *moral*, or rather his *immoral artillery*.

Without one principle of either religion or morals, he had no scruple of conscience to subdue, before he penned or uttered those horrid blasphemies which issued from his lips, and appeared in his proclamations, whenever he had any point to gain by them. This may possibly be termed, by those who sink, in their admiration of the military leader, the disgusting vices of the man, a mere *ruse de guerre;* but it, assuredly, is such a stratagem as no *Christian* chief would employ. In his memorable proclamation, intended at once to tranquillize and to allure the simple inhabitants of Egypt, he did not scruple to disown his redeemer; "There is no God, but only one God; he has not any son or associate in his kingdom;" were the words of this impious hypocrite. By an impudent affectation of knowledge, meant to conceal his real ignorance, he rendered the creed of despotism, the koran, a code of jacobinism. He told the astonished natives that it proclaimed the equality of men, and acknowledged no preference but what arose from the possession of understanding, ingenuity, and science; then, deducing from his sublime theory a practical inference, more intelligible to the people whom he addressed, he assured them that their superiors had no right to monopolize beautiful women, handsome slaves, fine horses, and fine houses. Nay, he even denied the right of possession to the property which they enjoyed, for the decisive reason, that they could shew no *lease* from God. In a word, every evil he imputed to the Mamelukes, and wished to impress a belief that the French were come to restore the golden age of Egypt, with all the "Great cities, large canals, and extensive trade," which the avarice, injustice, and tyranny, of the Mamelukes had destroyed.

After he had obtained possession of Grand Cairo, and of the intermediate country between that city and Alexandria, as well as of the banks of the Nile, he established a kind of mongrel government, nearly resembling the French oligarchy; the chief object of which was to station persons in different districts, to levy taxes for the benefit of the French, and to wrest from the people every thing which could contribute to the ease and comfort of their enemies. He established a divan at Cairo; and an institute, in which the vagabond Sçavans, whom he had brought with him from France, were employed. Buonaparté's arts,

however, failed to produce the desired effect, and his armies alone could ensure the obedience which he courted, or avert the danger which he dreaded. A popular insurrection at Cairo had nearly proved fatal to his cause. A General Dupuy, and some hundreds of the French were killed before it could be suppressed; of course a much larger number of the insurgents perished, and not a few afterwards fell by the hands of the executioner; for Buonaparté acted the sovereign wherever he went, and treated all who opposed him as traitors and rebels. Various skirmishes, and some sharp actions, took place between the invaders and the Mamelukes, under the command of the Beys, in different parts of the country, particularly in Upper Egypt, in all of which the superior discipline and tactics of the French baffled the rude courage and desultory attacks of their opponents.

But though Buonaparté had thus frustrated every attempt to thwart him in his designs, and had succeeded in establishing, by his sword, an absolute dominion in the country immediately occupied by his troops, he still found himself in a situation of peril. For it could not be supposed that the Porte would leave him in quiet possession of a portion of her territory; or that England would suffer him to reap the fruits of his iniquity, without an effort to wrest them from his hands. Indeed, the Porte had issued orders to the Governor of Syria and the Bashaw of Damascus, to raise a body of troops to act against the French; and these orders had been implicitly obeyed. Buonaparté made a vain attempt to persuade the former of these officers, Ghezzar Pacha, that he was a friend of the Grand Seignior, and had no intentions hostile to his interests. Ghezzar made no answer to the communication, but ordered all the French who were at Acra to be seized and thrown into prison.

Buonaparté was aware that, if an army was sent from Europe to attack him on the one side, while a Turkish force from Asia assailed him on the other, he might not be able to extricate himself from the difficulties with which he would be surrounded, and he, therefore, resolved to attack the Turks in the first instance, in the hopes of subduing them before they could receive assistance from other quarters. He accordingly made preparations for an attack upon Acra, the seat of Ghezzar's govern-

ment, and resolved, if he should succeed in that attempt, of which he had not the smallest doubt, to march forward to Constantinople. He sent his train of artillery, destined for the siege of this place, by sea, in February, 1799; he then divided his army into four divisions, under the command of Kleber, Bon, Reignier, and Lannes. The army proceeded to El-Arisch, where an action was fought in which the French were successful. They then advanced into the fertile plains of Gaza. Having met with little opposition, they moved forward to Jaffa, (the ancient Joppa) a sea port, on the coast of Palestine. The town of Jaffa was carried by assault, after a vigorous defence, which cost the French one thousand of their men. Numbers of the garrison were put to the sword; but the greater part of them having taken refuge in the mosques, and implored mercy from the French, their lives were spared. But that mercy which the soldiers had shewn, and cowards had they b[illegible] if they had acted otherwise, was a stranger to the breast of their inhuman commander. Three days after the place had fallen, Buonaparté reproved his men for their ill-timed lenity, and, being determined, at all events, to relieve himself from the care and support of three thousand eight hundred prisoners, he ordered them to be marched to a rising ground near Jaffa, where a division of French infantry was drawn up in front of them. When the Turks had entered into their fatal alignment, and the mournful preparations were completed, the signal gun fired. Vollies of musquetry and grape-shot were instantly played against the wretched victims of his barbarous revenge; and the wretch himself, who had been viewing the scene through a telescope, when he saw the smoke ascending, could not restrain his joy, but broke out into exclamations of applause. Indeed, he had some reason to dread the refusal of his troops to commit this base and cowardly act; for General Kleber had remonstrated, in the most earnest manner, and the Staff Officer, who commanded (for the General, to whom the division belonged, was absent) even refused to execute the orders without a written instruction; but the wily Corsican was too cautious to give such a testimony of his infamy, and, therefore, sent Berthier to enforce obedience to his orders.

Buonaparté had previously inspected, in person, the whole body of

the Turks, amounting to nearly five thousand men, with a view to save those who belonged to the towns which he was proposing to attack. The age and noble countenance of a veteran Janissary attracted his observation, and he said to him, sharply,—"Old man, what business had you here?" The Janissary, undaunted, answered,—"I must answer that question by asking you the same—your answer will be, that you come to serve your Sultan, so did I come to serve mine." The intrepid frankness of the reply excited universal interest in his favour. Buonaparté was even observed to smile. "He is saved," whispered some of his Aids-de-Camp. "You know not Buonaparté," said one who had served with him in Italy, "that smile, I speak from experience, does not proceed from a sentiment of benevolence; remember what I say." He was right.—The Janissary remained in the ranks, and was murdered with the rest of his countrymen.

Such of the Turks as were not immediately killed by the shot were put to death with the bayonet. Some French officers who were present, and on whose authority these particulars are related, declared that this was a scene, the recollection of which embittered their lives, and that, accustomed as they had been to acts of cruelty, they could not reflect on it without horror.

These were the prisoners to whom Assalini, in his book on the plague, alludes, when he says, that for three days the Turks shewed no symptoms of that disease, and that it was the putrifying bodies of these murdered captives that produced the pestilential malady which, by a kind of retributive justice, he describes as afterwards making such ravages in the French army. Their bones are still to be seen in heaps, and are shewn to every traveller who visits the place; nor can they be confounded with those of the garrison who perished in the assault, as this scene of butchery is situated at the distance of a mile from the town.*

* "Such a fact," says Sir Robert Wilson, from whose useful "*History of the British Expedition to Egypt*" this account is taken; "should not be alleged without some proof, or leading circumstance, stronger than assertion, being produced to support it; but there would

As if Buonaparté were anxious to "Out-Herod Herod," in cruelty, and to convince his army that he would suffer no sentiment of humanity, nor yet any feeling of gratitude, to interfere with his interest, or even with his convenience, he followed up this atrocious act by another, which exceeds even the enormities of Robespierre, of Carrier, and of Lebon. Finding that the hospitals at Jaffa were crowded with sick, he sent for a physician, whose name, as Sir Robert Wilson justly observes, ought to be inscribed in letters of gold, but whose personal safety has rendered it necessary to conceal it.—On his arrival, the Corsican entered into a long conversation with him respecting the danger of contagion, which he concluded by observing, that something must be done to remedy the evil, and that the destruction of the sick then in the hospital was the only measure which could be adopted for that purpose. The physician, alarmed at the proposal, bold in the cause of virtue and humanity, remonstrated strongly against the act, and represented the cruelty and atrocity of such a murder; but, finding Buonaparté persisted in his wicked purpose, and had even recourse to threats, he indignantly broke from him, and left his tent, with this memorable observation: "Neither my principles, nor the character of my profession, will allow me to become a butcher of human beings; and, General, if such qualities as you insinuate are necessary to form a great man, I thank God that I do not possess them."

Buonaparté, however, was not to be diverted from his object by any moral considerations, and he found an apothecary who had not the virtue to resist the weight of his authority, (but who has since made some atonement by an unequivocal confession of the fact) and who consented to become the minister of his guilt, and to administer poison to the sick. A sufficient quantity of opium was, accordingly, mixed

be a want of generosity in naming individuals, and branding them to the latest posterity with infamy for obeying a command, when their submission became an act of necessity, since the whole army did not mutiny against the execution; therefore, to establish farther the authencity of the relation, this only can be mentioned, that it was Bon's division which fired, and thus every one is afforded an opportunity of satisfying themselves respecting the truth, by inquiring of officers serving in the different brigades composing this division."—P. 74.

with pleasant food, of which the unsuspecting victims freely partook; and, in a few hours, five hundred and eighty soldiers, who had suffered so much for the tyrants of their afflicted country, and to gratify the ambition of this guilty Corsican, thus miserably perished by his order.

On the return of Buonaparté from Syria, the same virtuous physician, who had refused to become the instrument of murder, and to destroy those whom it was his duty to protect, publicly accused the Corsican, before all the members of the institute at Cairo, of high treason against the honour of France, against her children, and against humanity; and he there entered into all the particulars of the poisoning of the sick, and of the massacre of the Turks; and farther charged Buonaparté with having *previously* caused a number of French and Copts, who were infected with the plague, to be strangled at Rosetta; thus proving that this horrible mode of getting rid of his sick was the result of premeditation, and a plan which he wished to introduce into general practice. In vain did the unfeeling Corsican attempt to justify his conduct; the astonished members sate petrified with terror, and almost doubted whether the scene passing before their eyes was not an illusion.*

When we read of the cruelties of Caligula and a Nero; when we trace the atrocities of Louis the Eleventh, and of a Charles the Ninth; when we contemplate the character of our Third Richard, as delineated by the pencil of our great dramatic bard; we revolt with horror from the black catalogue of their crimes, and devote their guilty perpetrators

* Sir Robert Wilson's History of the Expedition to Egypt, &c. p. 75, 76.—Buonaparté pleaded, that he ordered the garrison to be destroyed, because he had not provisions to maintain them, or strength enough to guard them; and that it was evident, if they escaped, they would act against the French, since among the prisoners were five hundred of the garrison of El-Arisch, who had promised not to serve again; (they had been compelled, in passing through Jaffa, by the Commandant to serve) and that he destroyed the sick to prevent contagion, and save them from falling into the hands of the Turks. But these arguments, however specious, were immediately refuted; and Buonaparté was at last obliged to rest his defence on the authority of Machiavel. On his departure from Egypt, the Savans were so angry at being left behind, to pursue their scientific researches, that they elected the Physician to be President of the Institute, an act which spoke for itself.—Idem. Ibid.

to the execration of our latest posterity. How, then, does it happen, that enormities such as Napoleone Buonaparté has committed, enormities never surpassed, and seldom equalled, by those of the gloomy tyrants of former ages, can be viewed by numbers, not only without similar emotions, but with indifference, and, not unfrequently, with complacency? How happens it that, with every feature of meanness, duplicity, and fraud, in his character; with every ferocious and sanguinary quality that ever disgraced a human being; with a mind harbouring all that leads to acts which render men objects of reprobation and disgust; with a heart cherishing every evil propensity, and distinguished by no one generous or humane feeling; this foul regicide, whose tears are those of the crocodile, and whose smile is death, can be considered by any one, endowed with the faculties of an intellectual being, as a *great man?* The sentiment which dictates a decision so revoltingly unjust, so grossly repugnant to common sense, bespeaks a dreadful perversion of the human mind; while the assertion exhibits a shameless prostitution of terms of applause. This can arise only from the silent progress of the monstrous principles of the new philosophy, which deaden the moral feeling, produce a morbid apathy of character, and disqualify the mind for the reception of any social, of any good, or salutary, impression. Some features of the character which Guicciardini has ascribed to Pope Leo the Tenth, are as applicable to Buonaparté as if he had really sat for the picture himself.—" Costumi oscenissimi, non sincerità, non vergogna, non verita, non fede, non religione, avarizia insaziabile, AMBIZIONE IMMODERATA, CRUDELTA PIU CHE BARBARA."

Yet has a member of the British Senate not scrupled to assert, that we should speak of this man only with the respect due to the sovereign of an independent state, without expressing any disapprobation of his character, or any abhorrence of his crimes. If this doctrine were sound and true, our speech should not be the expression of our sentiments; our words should not be influenced by a regard to truth; we should become the worst of hypocrites, by arraying vice in the garb of virtue; and the world would be deprived of all the benefits which are to be derived from the salutary dread and horror which a just representation of criminal actions is calculated to afford. Nay, according to this

principle, the crimes of usurpers ought not to be recorded in the page of history, and posterity is to lose one of the most useful and instructive lessons which history can impart! But, with the historian of the Egyptian expedition, we will hope, "that in no country will there be found *another* man of such Machiavelian principles, as by sophistry to palliate these transactions; nor must the judgment abuse itself by bringing to recollection the horrors of the French Revolution, and thus diminishing the force of those crimes by the frequency of equal guilt in France, during her contest for liberty or slavery."

During his stay at Jaffa, Buonaparté sent a second letter to Ghezzar Pacha, announcing his intention of marching to Acra, boasting of his own mercy, and blasphemously observing, that, as God granted him victory, "he would, *like him*, be clement and merciful." He renewed his offers of friendship to Ghezzar, provided he would not oppose him, and sent him a passport to repair to the French head-quarters. Ghezzar, however, was too wise to fall into such a snare; he sent a laconic answer to the Corsican, and told him he might proceed to Acra as soon as he pleased.

Buonaparté, accordingly, advanced to Acra, and, on the eighteenth of March, established his camp upon an eminence, at a small distance from the feeble walls of the place. Ghezzar, who was fully aware of his movements, had, on his departure from Jaffa, apprized Sir Sidney Smith, who was cruising on the coast, and with whom he had established a previous communication, of the approach of the enemy. And, with that promptitude, energy, and dispatch, which so peculiarly mark the conduct of this naval hero, Sir Sidney hastened to his relief, and arrived at Acra two days before the French. His presence gave fresh spirits to the Pacha, and his troops, who determined to defend the town to the last extremity, and the English officers and men, employed the short interval, before the arrival of the enemy, in putting the place in a better state of defence.

The advanced guard of the French was discovered at the foot of Mount Carmel, in the night of the seventeenth of March, by the guard

boats of the Tigre, the ship which bore Sir Sidney's flag. These troops, not expecting to find a naval force, of any description, on the Syrian coast, took up their ground close to the water-side, and were, consequently, exposed to the fire of grape-shot from the boats, which put them to the rout the instant it opened upon them, and compelled them to retire, with precipitation, up the side of the hill. The main body of the army, finding the road between the sea and Mount Carmel thus exposed, advanced by the road of Nazareth, and invested the town of Acra to the East, but not without being much harassed by the Samaritan Arabs, who were even more inimical to the French than the Egyptians were, and better armed. As the French returned the British fire only with musquetry, it became evident to Sir Sidney that they had not brought cannon with them, which were, therefore, to be expected by sea; and measures were taken, accordingly, for intercepting them. The flotilla, which conveyed them, was soon discovered from the Tigre, consisting of a corvette, and nine sail of gun vessels, very near the shore. On seeing the British ships, the French immediately hauled off, but they were instantly perceived, and seven of them, having on board the whole of the battering train of artillery, ammunition, and other necessary implements for the siege of Acra, fell into the hands of the English. These cannon were particularly serviceable for the defence of the place which they had been destined to attack, and they were applied, without delay, to that purpose. The prizes, too, were anchored off the town, manned with English sailors, and immediately employed in harassing the enemy's posts, impeding his approaches, and covering the ships' boats which were sent further in shore, to cut off his supplies of provisions conveyed coastways.

The French, deprived of these supplies, brought thirty pieces of artillery from Jaffa, and, in spite of the most vigorous resistance, succeeded in carrying their trenches to within half a musquet-shot of the ditch of the place. On the thirteenth of March, having effected a breach in the wall, on the north-east part of the town, they made an attempt to take it by assault, but were repulsed with considerable loss. Between this time and the second of May, no less than four similar attempts were made, but they all proved equally fruitless. The Tigre, moored on one

side, and the Theseus, on the other, flanked the town walls; while the gun-boats, launches, and other rowing boats, did the same by the enemy's trenches, and destroyed numbers of their men. In order to increase the means of annoyance, two ravelins were run out on each side of the enemy's nearest approach, by the crews of the Tigre and Theseus, under the superintendance and direction of Colonel Phelipeaux, an emigrant officer of engineers, of great abilities, who had accompanied Sir Sidney Smith on this expedition. This gallant gentleman, unfortunately, fell a victim to his zeal; for the fatigue which he endured, in providing for the defence of Acra, produced a fever, which soon deprived him of life. The Turks afforded essential assistance in this dangerous service; they fetched the gabions, fascines, and other materials, necessary for the construction of the ravelins, and which the garrison could not supply, from the face of the enemy's works, setting fire to what they could not take away. The enemy, however, were equally vigilant and active, since they repaired, in the night, all the injury which they sustained in the day, and continued within half pistol-shot of the walls, in spite of the constant fire kept up from the ramparts. The garrison, meanwhile, made frequent sallies, which greatly increased the loss of the French, whose dead bodies nearly filled the ditch.

The defence of Acra, even, for the time which it had already continued, in the weak state of the fortifications, with the feeble garrison which it contained, would have been impracticable without the incessant exertions of the British seamen and marines, and the persevering spirit of their gallant commander. A large reinforcement of Turkish troops, which had long been expected, at last arrived, on the eighth of May, which was the fifty-first day of this memorable siege. The approach of this additional force was the signal to Buonaparté for a most vigorous and obstinate assault, in hopes to get possession of the town before the reinforcement to the garrison could land.

The constant fire of the besiegers was suddenly increased in a tenfold degree, while the flanking fire from the British vessels was, as usual, plied to the utmost, but with less effect than heretofore, as the enemy had thrown up epaulments and traverses of sufficient thickness to afford

him protection. Two guns, however, a French brass eighteen-pounder in the Light-House Castle, under the direction of a petty officer of the Theseus; and a twenty-four pounder in the north ravelin, under the direction of a midshipman of the Tigre, and both worked by English sailors, played on the enemy with considerable effect. These guns, being within the reach of grape-shot from the head of the attacking column, added to the Turkish musquetry, did great execution. Two sixty-eight pound carronades, also, under the carpenter of the Tigre, mounted on two germes lying in the mole, threw shells into the centre of the column, with evident effect, and checked it considerably. Still, regardless of lives, the enemy gained ground, and made a lodgment in the second story of the north-east tower, the upper part being entirely battered down, and the ruins in the ditch forming an ascent by which they mounted. At break of day, the French flag was discovered flying on the outer angle of the tower. The fire of the besieged was much slackened, in comparison with that of the besiegers, and the British flanking-fire had become of less effect, as the enemy had covered themselves in this lodgment, and the approach to it, by two traverses across the ditch, which they had constructed under the fire which had been opposed to them during the whole night, and which were now seen composed of sand bags, and the bodies of their dead built in with them, their bayonets being only visible above them. The Turkish troops, which had just arrived under Hassan Bey, were, at this time, in the boats, but not more than half way between the ships and the shore. This was a most critical point of the contest; and an effort became necessary to preserve the place till their arrival.

That effort Sir Sidney Smith resolved to make. He accordingly landed the boats at the mole, and led the crews up to the breach, armed with pikes. The enthusiastic gratitude of the Turks, men, women, and children, at the sight of this seasonable reinforcement, exceeded the powers of description. Many fugitives returned with this little band to the breach, which was defended by a few brave Turks, whose most destructive missile weapons were heavy stones, which, striking the assailants on the head, overthrew the foremost down the slope, and impeded the progress of those behind. A succession, however, ascended to the assault, the

heap of ruins between the two parties serving as a breast-work for both; the muzzles of their musquets touching, and the spear-heads of the standards locked. Ghezzar Pacha, hearing the English were on the breach, quitted his station, where, according to the ancient Turkish custom, he was sitting to reward such as should bring him the heads of the enemy, and distributing musquet cartridges with his own hands. The brave old man going behind the English, pulled them down with violence, observing that, if any harm should happen to his English friends, all would be lost. This honourable and friendly struggle for the privilege of defending the breach, brought a number of Turks to the spot, by whose assistance time was gained for the arrival of the first body of Hassan Bey's troops. Another difficulty now arose, from the Pacha's repugnance to admit any troops, but his Albanians, into the garden of the Seraglio, which had become a very important post, as occupying the terre-plein of the rampart. There were not above two hundred of these Albanians, who were, originally, a thousand strong, left; a force utterly inadequate to the defence of the post. There was not a moment to be lost; and Sir Sidney Smith's presence of mind removed this extraordinary obstacle; for the Grand Seignior had placed under his immediate command the Chifflic regiment of one thousand men, armed with bayonets, disciplined after the European method, under Sultan Selim's own eye; and these the Pacha had no objection to introduce into his garden. The garrison, animated by the appearance of so powerful a reinforcement, pressed forward to the scene of action; and there being consequently enough to defend the breach, Sir Sidney proposed to the Pacha to get rid of the objects of his jealousy, by opening the gates to let them pass. The Pacha readily complied, and Sir Sidney gave directions to the Colonel to get possession of the enemy's third parallel, or nearest trench, and there to fortify himself, by shifting the parapet outwards. This order being clearly understood, the gates were opened, and the Turks rushed out; but they were unequal to such an attempt, and were driven back to the town with loss.

This sortie had the good effect of obliging the enemy to expose themselves above the parapets, so that the flanking fire of the English brought down numbers of them, and drew their force from the breach, when

the small number remaining on the lodgment were killed, or dispersed, by the few remaining hand grenades, thrown by a midshipman of the Theseus. The enemy began a new breach, by an incessant fire directed to the southward of the lodgment, every shot knocking down whole sheets of wall much less solid than that of the tower on which they had expended so much time and ammunition.

The group of French Generals and Aids-de-Camp, which the shells, from the two sixty-eight pounders, had frequently dispersed, was now assembled on an eminence, called Richard Cœur de Lion's Mount.—Buonaparté was there distinguished in the centre of a circle; his gesticulations indicated a renewal of the attack, and the circumstances of his dispatching an Aid-de-Camp to the camp, shewed that he waited only for a reinforcement. Sir Sidney, therefore, gave immediate directions for Hassan Bey's ships to take their station in shoal water to the southward, and made the Tigre's signal to weigh, and join the Theseus to the northward. A little before sun-set, a massive column appeared advancing to the breach with a slow and solemn step. The Pacha suggested the idea of not disputing the breach at this time, but rather to let a certain number of the enemy in, and then close with them, according to the Turkish mode of war. The column thus mounted the breach without molestation, and descended from the rampart into the Pacha's garden, where the Turks employed the sabres and daggers with which they were armed, one of either in each hand, with such effect, that, in a very few minutes, the bravest and most advanced among them lay headless corpses; the rest retreated precipitately; and the commanding officer, General Lasne, was carried off, wounded by a musquet shot. General Rombaud was killed. Much confusion arose in the town from the actual entry of the enemy, as it would have been imprudent to give previous information to the inhabitants of the mode of defence adopted, lest the enemy should have come to a knowledge of it by means of their numerous emissaries.

During this contest, which lasted five and twenty hours, the surrounding hills were crowded with an immense multitude of spectators, who only waited to see how it would terminate, to join the conquerors. Had

Buonaparté's fortune prevailed, the reinforcement which he then would have obtained, might have enabled him to pursue his schemes of conquest, and, as Sir Sidney Smith observed, Constantinople, and even Vienna, must have felt the shock.

Conceiving that the ideas which the Syrians had been led to entertain of the supposed irresistible prowess of the invaders must be changed, since they had witnessed the check which the besieging army daily sustained in their operations before the town of Acra, Sir Sidney Smith wrote a circular letter to the princes and chiefs of the Christians of Mount Lebanon, and also to the Sheiks of the Druses, recalling them to a sense of their duty, and engaging them to cut off the supplies for the French camp. He sent them, at the same time, a copy of Buonaparté's impious proclamation, accompanied by a suitable exhortation, calling upon them to choose between the friendship of a Christian Knight, and that of an unprincipled renegado. This letter had the desired effect; they immediately sent two ambassadors to Sir Sidney, not only with professions of friendship, but with offers of obedience; assuring him that, in proof of the latter, they had sent out parties to arrest such of the mountaineers, as should be found carrying wine and gunpowder to the French camp, and placing eighty prisoners of that description at his disposal. Sir Sidney had thus the satisfaction to find Buonaparté's career further to the northward effectually stopped by a warlike people, inhabiting an impenetrable country. General Kleber's division which had been sent eastward, towards the fords of the Jordan, to oppose the Damascus army, was recalled from thence to take its turn in the daily efforts to mount the breach at Acra, in which every other division in succession had failed, with the loss of their bravest men, and three-fourths of their officers. Much was expected by this division, as it had, by its firmness, and the steady front which it opposed, in the form of a hollow square, kept upwards of ten thousand men in check during a whole day, in the plain between Nazareth and Mount Tabor, till Buonaparté arrived with his horse-artillery, and extricated his troops, dispersing the multitude of irregular cavalry, by which they were completely surrounded.

The Turkish Chifflic regiment, having been censured for the ill success of their sally, and for their unsteadiness in the attack of the garden, made a fresh sally the next night; Soloman Aga, the Lieutenant-Colonel, being determined to retrieve the honour of his regiment by a punctual obedience of the orders which he had received from Sir Sidney, to make himself master of the enemy's third parallel. This he accomplished most effectually; but the impetuosity of a few of his followers carried them on to the second trench, where they lost some of their standards, though they spiked four guns, before they retreated.—Thus Kleber's division, instead of mounting the breach, according to Buonaparté's intention, was obliged to spend its time and strength in the recovery of those works, in which it succeeded, after a conflict of three hours, leaving every thing as it was before, the loss of men excepted, which was very considerable on both sides. In these assaults, the French Adjutant-General, Fouler, Venaux, commander of a brigade, and General Bon, besides a great number of Field Officers, were killed.

After this failure, the French Grenadiers absolutely refused to mount the breach any more over the putrid bodies of their unburied companions, sacrificed, in former attacks, by Buonaparté's impatience and precipitation, which led him to commit such palpable errors as even seamen could take advantage of. He seemed to have no principle of action but that of pressing forward; and appeared ready to make every sacrifice to obtain the object of his ambition; although it was evident to every body else, that, even if he had succeeded in taking the town, the fire from the shipping must have driven him out of it again in a short time. The garrison, however, apprized of the inhuman massacre at Jaffa, were rendered desperate in their personal defence.

Such was the rage of the French at the effective assistance which Sir Sidney Smith, and his little band of gallant seamen, had afforded to the Turks, that they made two attempts to assassinate him. And these having failed, they had recourse to a most flagrant breach of every law of honour and of war. A flag of truce was sent into the town by the hand of an Arab dervise, with a letter to the Pacha, proposing a cessation of arms for the purpose of burying the dead bodies, the stench

from which had become intolerable, and threatened the destruction of both parties, many having died delirious within a few hours after being seized with the first symptoms of infection. This proposal was listened to with pleasure, and during the conference no thoughts of hostility, of course, were entertained.

While the answer was under consideration, a volley of shot and shells, on a sudden, announced an assault, which, however, the garrison was ready to receive, and the assailants only contributed to increase the number of the dead bodies in question, to the eternal disgrace of the general who, thus disloyally, sacrificed them. Sir Sidney Smith saved the life of the Arab from the effect of the indignation of the Turks, and took him on board the Tigre, whence he sent him back to Buonaparté with a message which made the army ashamed of having been exposed to such a merited reproof. Subordination was now at an end, and all hopes of success having vanished, the French had no alternative left but a precipitate retreat, which was put in execution, on the night of the 20th of May. Their cannon was embarked in the country vessels at Jaffa to be conveyed coastways, together with the worst among the two thousand wounded who embarrassed the march of the army. These vessels, being hurried to sea without seamen to navigate them, and the wounded being in want of every necessary, even water and provisions, (for Buonaparté, wanting only to get rid of them, cared not what became of them) steered straight to the English ships, in full confidence of receiving those succours from an enemy, which had been barbarously withheld from them by their own commander. Nor were they disappointed in their expectation. The expressions of gratitude which these unfortunate men used for the kind treatment which they experienced, were mingled with execrations on the name of their general, who had, as they said, thus exposed them to peril, rather than fairly and honourably renew the intercourse with the English, which he had broken off by a false and malicious assertion, that Sir Sidney Smith had intentionally exposed the former prisoners to the infection of the plague.* To the honor of the French army be it said, this assertion

* The following address, from Buonaparté to the Chief of the General Staff, contains the scandalous falsehood in question.

was not believed by them, and it recoiled on the head of its infamous author. The intention of it was evidently to do away the effect which the proclamation of the Porte began to make on the soldiers, whose eager hands were held above the parapet of their works to receive it when thrown from the breach. Buonaparté could not plead misinformation as his excuse, his aid-de-camp, Mr. Lallemand, having had free intercourse with these prisoners, on board the Tigre, when he went to treat about them; and having been ordered, though too late, not to repeat their expressions of satisfaction at the prospect of going home. It was evident to both armies, that, when a general had recourse to such a shallow, and, at the same time, such a mean artifice, as a malicious falsehood, all better resources were at an end, and the defection among his troops was, consequently, increased to the highest pitch. The utmost disorder was manifested on the retreat of the French, and the whole tract, between Acra and Gaza, was strewed with the dead bodies of those who had sunk under fatigue, or the effect of slight wounds; such as could walk, unfortunately for them, not having been embarked.

"The Commander of the English squadron before Acra, having had the barbarity to embark on board a vessel which was infected with the plague, the French prisoners taken in two Tartans, laden with ammunition, which he took near Caiffa, in the sortie, which took place on the 18th, having been remarked at the head of the barbarians, and the English flag having been, at the same time, flying over many towers in the place, the barbarous conduct which the besieged displayed, in cutting off the heads of two volunteers who were killed, must be attributed to the English Commander, a conduct which is very opposite to the honours which have been paid to English officers and soldiers found in the field of battle, and to the attention which has been shewn to wounded and to prisoners.

"The English being those who defend and provision Acra, the horrible conduct of Ghezzar, who caused to be strangled and thrown into the water, with their hands tied behind their backs, more than two hundred christians, inhabitants of this country, among whom was a Secretary of a French Consul, must be equally attributed to this officer, since, from circumstances, the Pacha had found himself entirely dependent upon him.

"This officer having besides refused to execute any of the articles of exchange established between the two powers, and his proposals, in all the communications which have taken place, and his conduct, since the time he has been cruizing here, having been those of a madman, my desire is that you order the different Commanders on the coast to give up all communication with the English fleet, actually cruizing in these seas.

"BUONAPARTE."

The rowing gun-boats annoyed the van column of the retreating army in its march along the beach, and the Arabs harassed its rear, when it turned from the shore to avoid their fire. A party of these Arabs went down to the sea side, where the English boats lay, and touched the British flag, with every token of union and respect.* The French

* I have thought it the more necessary to enter into some detail of this glorious achievement on the part of the gallant defenders of Acra, the particulars of which have been taken, nearly verbatim, from the admirable letters of Sir Sidney Smith, who was master of all the circumstances, who was too intelligent to be misled, and too honourable to mislead; from having found an English historical writer disposed to question the accuracy of Sir Sidney's account, and to give a decided preference to the authorities of *Berthier* and *Regnier*. In the brief account of the revolution at Rome, Berthier was proved to have been guilty of the most shameless falsehoods, and of the most fraudulent conduct; and whoever has read Regnier's Account of the Campaigns in Egypt, must know him to have most grossly misrepresented many of the leading events, and to have betrayed the most unprincipled disregard of honour, and the most palpable contempt of truth. Were there, then, no circumstances of internal evidence to destroy the credit of the French accounts, the fact alone, of these writers standing convicted of fraud and of falsehood, would be sufficient to give a decided superiority over their evidence, to the testimony of one whose veracity had never been impeached. As to Regnier's book, whoever wishes, without submitting to the trouble of perusing it, to see glaring instances of the qualities which I have ascribed to it, may be satisfied by a reference to Sir Robert Wilson's History of the Expedition to Egypt, and more particularly to his preface.

The writer to whom I have referred, who composed the historical part of the Annual Register for 1799, labours, with a great show of candour, to discredit the testimony of Sir Sidney, and to raise Buonaparté in the estimation of his readers. Even on an occasion, (the siege of Acra) in which he displayed the most consummate ignorance, as a General, this writer discovers, in his conduct, "good *generalship* and *address*;" and Sir Sidney is reproved for the light manner in which he speaks of a man whose "*sound judgment, and uncommon abilities*," appear to have stupified the senses of this historical panegyrist. He then gives Buonaparté credit for the truth of his assertion, that he could have taken Acra in a few more days, but that his army was wanted for more important operations; an assertion so preposterously false and ridiculous, that the merest political infant could not, we should have thought, be deceived by it. But the credulity of this writer extends even farther, and leads him to adopt the ridiculous notion, that, by his expedition to Acra, Buonaparté had accomplished his sole object, which was to prevent an attack upon Egypt, from the side of Syria; and which attack afterwards took place. But if credulity had been the only defect observable in this historical detail of the operations in Syria, I should not have considered it worthy of this lengthened notice. It must be remarked, however, that, with the determined spirit of investigation, for which the writer evidently takes merit to himself, and with all the impartiality which he so strongly professes, he does not take the smallest notice of the atrocious conduct of Buonaparté, in murder-

army, at last, made good their retreat to Cairo, laying waste on the road, every district, and destroying every village, that appeared hostile towards them. They reached Cairo on the fourteenth of June.

Buonaparté's attention, after his arrival in Egypt, had been directed to the accomplishment of one essential part of his project—the establishment of a communication and concert with the great enemy of the British government in India, Tippoo Sultaun, for the grand purpose of extirpating the English from their Oriental settlements. He apprized Tippoo of his arrival on the shores of the Red Sea, and requested him to send some confidential person, with whom he might confer on the subject of their mutual plans. Tippoo, too, on his part, had established a close intercourse with Zemaun Shah, a native prince of great power and influence, in order to concert such a formidable attack upon the English as, it was hoped, they would be unable to resist. Mr. Pitt, however, most fortunately for the interests of his country, had placed, at the head of the Indian government, a young nobleman of a mind possessing, in a peculiar degree, every qualification for a great statesman. —The wisdom, the vigilance, the energy, decision, zeal, resolution, and activity, of Lord Mornington were eminently calculated to meet, and to subdue, those serious dangers which now threatened the subversion of British power in the East.

After his Lordship had removed all the previous difficulties which he

ing the three thousand eight hundred Turks in cold blood, in the vicinity of Jaffa, and in poisoning his own sick in the hospital of that place. To whatever cause this omission may be ascribed, its effect must be fatal to the credit of the narrative. And thus it is that the sources of historical knowledge are corrupted, and that false impressions are made on the public mind! —As an inexcusable instance of negligence and inattention in the same writer, it must be observed that, in 1798, p. 128, he makes the French army, which sailed from Toulon for Egypt, amount to "about twenty thousand men," whereas, in 1799, p. 6, we find the same army amounting "to near 40,000;" and not a reason is assigned for this difference of statement, nor even one word said about it. To such a chronicler be the grateful task assigned of celebrating "the *virtues*" of a Murat; and to record "the EGREGIOUS merit of so *illustrious* an adversary" as Napoleone Buonaparté; and to proclaim, to an admiring world, "that there never was any general, ancient or modern, if we ought not to except Alexander the Great, who so happily united the progress of arms with the advancement of science!!!"

had to encounter, he assembled, with promptitude, a force adequate to the great design which he had formed of curtailing, if not of destroying, the means of annoyance which were possessed by the Sultaun of the Mysore, to a very alarming extent. Being now prepared for attack, he communicated to Tippoo the knowledge which he had acquired of his hostile designs, of his alliance with the French, and of his preparations for war; and offered, if he would forego these projects, which were as hostile to existing treaties, as they were subversive of sound policy and of good faith, to send an officer to treat with him, for the establishment and preservation of a friendly intercourse between him and the British government. The wily Sultaun sent an equivocal answer to this candid communication, and, while he sought to elude the vigilance of English policy, he hastened his preparations for the destruction of English power. But Lord Mornington was not to be led astray by Indian artifice; equally wise in council, and vigorous in action, he ordered the British army to take the field at the commencement of the year 1799. It was commanded in chief by Lieutenant-General Harris, who, after a series of successful operations, set himself down before the capital of Tippoo's dominions, at the latter end of April, and, on the last day of that month, began to batter in breach. On the third of May, a practicable breach was effected, and, on the following morning, Seringapatam was taken by assault. Tippoo himself, and several of his chiefs, perished in this action. This splendid achievement afforded the means of consolidating the strength of the British dominion in the East, by annihilating the most dangerous of all the native powers, and by gaining possession of a country, and of fortresses, which, while they increased internal security, supplied a fresh barrier against external attack. The French Directory had thus the mortification of being not only foiled in one of their greatest attempts, but of witnessing the utter extinction of those means and resources by which they hoped to accomplish it. In a word, their friendship proved as fatal to Tippoo, as their enmity had proved to the minor princes of Europe.

After the return of Buonaparté from Syria to Egypt, the Turkish force made a vain attempt to recover that country from the French. The undisciplined Mussulmans were, after an obstinate action near Aboukir

defeated with great loss on the 25th of July, and compelled to retire. The Corsican, however, ruminating on his repulse at Acra, where he had, for the first time, experienced defeat and disgrace, and fearful that his attempts to impose on his followers, whom, on the present occasion, he had succeeded in persuading, that his expedition to Acra had answered every purpose for which it had been undertaken, and had covered the army with glory, might not always be successful; and looking forward, no doubt, to the day when a British force would again strip his ill-earned laurels from his brow, resolved to repair to a country more congenial with his disposition and pursuits. This resolution to betray his duty, to abandon his post, and to desert those gallant men who had braved every danger, and had faced death and destruction in every form, at his command, was only exceeded in baseness by the mode in which it was accomplished. He left Alexandria on the 23d of August, and, unhappily for Europe, escaped capture, and reached France early in October.

He communicated his intentions to none but those whom he intended to accompany him; he stripped the military chest of the last *sol*; and he left the army in a most deplorable state. He was a *deserter*, too, in every sense of the word; for he left his command without *orders*, and even without *permission*; and had he been tried by the articles of war, then in force in every country of Europe, France herself not excepted, he must have been found guilty, and have suffered an ignominious death, as a deserter! And yet has this criminal found advocates, and eulogists, in this free country, where honour, justice, morals, and religion are respected. But let one of his own Generals describe the state in which he left his army.

"I shall say but little to you," says General Dugua to Barras, the Director, writing from Cairo on the 13th of October, 1799, "on the departure of the general. It was only communicated to those who were to accompany him. It was precipitate. The army was thirteen days without a commander in chief. There was not a sol in any of the military chests; no part of the service arranged; the enemy, scarcely retired from Aboukir, was still before Damietta. Such was our situation

at Cairo, from the 18th of August," (Buonaparté sailed from Alexandria on the 23d) " to the 30th. I confess to you, Citizen Director, that I could never have believed that General Buonaparté would abandon us in the condition in which we were; without money, without powder, without ball, and one part of the soldiers without arms. Alexandria is a vast entrenched camp, which the expedition into Syria has deprived of a considerable portion of the heavy artillery necessary for its defence. Lesbé, near Damietta, is scarcely walled in; part of the wall of El-Arisch is tumbling of itself. Debts to an enormous amount; more than a third of the army destroyed by the plague, the dysentery, by opthalmia, and by the war: that which remains almost naked; and the enemy but eight days march from us! Whatever may be told you at Paris, this description is but too true; you know me to be incapable of imposing on you by a false one."

This account of Dugua's is confirmed by the representations of Kleber, Poussielgue, and others, contained in the collection of intercepted letters which were printed in London, and which supply a most important mass of authentic information for the historian. Buonaparté in his address to the army, on the day of his departure, and which was not delivered till he had sailed, impudently and falsely ascribes his return to France to the news which he had received (through some newspapers which accidentally fell into his hands) from Europe. This address contained as many lies as lines. He said it grieved him " to the heart to part from the brave men to whom he was so tenderly attached;" but it would " be only for an instant;" whereas this departure had been long premeditated, and he had not the most distant intention of ever returning. In proof of this fact, it is necessary to adduce the usurper's own authority. In a letter, dated from Cairo on the 28th of July, 1798, not a month after his arrival in Egypt, and addressed to his brother Joseph, he made the following statement:* " Egypt is the richest country in the world, in wheat, rice, pulse, and cattle. Barbarism is at its height. THERE IS

* See this letter in the " Copies of Original Letters from the French army in Egypt." Part the Third. p. 158, 159.

NO MONEY IN THE COUNTRY ;* NO, NOT EVEN TO PAY THE TROOPS. I THINK OF BEING IN FRANCE IN TWO MONTHS. Take your measures so that I may have a country seat at my arrival, either in the neighbourhood of Paris, or in Burgundy ; I RECKON ON PASSING THE WINTER THERE."

In his letter to Kleber, announcing his departure, and resigning to him the command of the army, Buonaparté observes to him, " No one has better means of judging of the importance of Egypt to France than yourself. The Turkish empire, menaced with ruin on every side, is crumbling to pieces at this moment; the evacuation of Egypt on our part, would be so much the more unfortunate, as we should be sure to see, ere long, this fine province fall into the hands of some other European power." Aware, however, of the impossibility of retrieving Egypt without reinforcements, which could not be received while England was mistress of the occean, he advises Kleber to enter into a negotiation with the Turks, adding, " *adhere strenuously and constantly to the assertion which I have advanced, that France never had the least idea* OF TAKING EGYPT FROM THE GRAND SEIGNIOR." Kleber was equally aware, with

* The observations of the editor of the Intercepted Correspondence on this curious instrument are so perfectly just and appropriate, that I cannot do better than lay them before my readers. " THERE IS NO MONEY IN THE COUNTRY. It is worth observation, that this sentence was written the very day after Buonaparté had declared, in his official letters, to all Europe, that, on the bodies of the two thousand Mamelukes, who fell in the " battle of the pyramids," his soldiers had found " 20,000,000 of livres," (about 880,000*l.* sterling) " in specie ! ! !

" But this is not all,—it appears from the next line that Egypt was expected to furnish money for the troops. This is a precious circumstance, and affords matter for deep reflection. Buonaparté left France, perhaps, without a single day's pay for his army. The plunder of Malta, except a few ingots that were distributed amongst the merchants of Alexandria, with a view of being speedily reclaimed, was on board the *L'Orient*; and, with the expected treasures of Cairo, and the grand caravan, was, undoubtedly, destined to swell the private fortunes of the general and his confidents ; while the troops were to be left, as in Suabia and Franconia, and Brabant and Holland, and Italy and Switzerland, to support themselves, by wresting from the inhabitants, who are thus, in mockery, made ' free, and prosperous, and happy,' the miserable reliques of the rapacity of the officers, and the agents of government !"—*Copies of Original Letters, &c. Part the Second*, p. 100, 101. Note.

Buonaparté, of the value of Egypt to France. In his letter to the Directory, in which he fully exposes the false statements of the Corsican, respecting the state of the army, and the means of defence, he says, "I know all the importance of the possession of Egypt. I used to say in Europe, that this country was for France the point of fixture, by means of which she might move at will the commercial system of every quarter of the globe; but to do this effectually, a powerful lever is required, and that lever is a navy. OURS HAS EXISTED. Since that period every thing has changed; and peace with the Porte is, in my opinion, the only expedient that holds out to us a method of fairly getting rid of an enterprise no longer capable of attaining the object for which it was undertaken."

Kleber had more knowledge than Buonaparté, and much greater integrity. *His* object was to make a real peace with the Turks, and not to deceive them, by the detestable duplicity and deception which the Corsican recommended to be practised upon them. Poussielgue, however, whom Buonaparté had appointed Chancellor of *his* Exchequer in Egypt, seems to have possessed much the same spirit as his patron. In a letter to Merlin, one of the Directory, he recommends peace with England and the Porte, as no purpose could be answered by continuing the war, "*and no inconvenience sustained by adjourning our claims to a happier period.* At all events, IT IS INDISPENSABLE TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS IN THE MOST EARNEST MANNER WITH THE ENGLISH AND THE PORTE, EVEN IF NO OTHER ADVANTAGE SHOULD RESULT FROM THEM THAN GAINING TIME AND GIVING OFFENCE TO RUSSIA."

Buonaparté, in the instructions which he left with Kleber, in which he adverted to the state of the country, had said, "Alexandria and El-Arisch are the two keys of Egypt;" on which assertion Kleber observes to the Directory, "El-Arisch is a paltry fort, four days journey in the desert; the prodigious difficulty of victualling it will not allow of its being garrisoned by more than two hundred and fifty men. Six hundred Mamelukes and Arabs might, whenever they pleased, cut off all communication with Gatiez; and as, when Buonaparté left us, this garrison had but a fortnight's provision in advance, just that space of time, and

no more, would be sufficient to compel it to capitulate without firing a shot. The Arabs alone were capable of furnishing regular convoys of provisions through these burning deserts; but they have been so often overreached and defrauded, that, far from offering us their services, they now keep aloof, and conceal themselves; besides, the arrival of the Grand Vizier, who inflames their fanaticism, and overwhelms them with presents, will equally tend to incline them to desert us."*

This account of the wretched state of a place which Buonaparté styled one of the two keys of Egypt, was confirmed by another general officer, Dugua, whose letter has been quoted before; and, it has been truly remarked, it bears hard either on the veracity or on the military skill of the Corsican. The latter (of the former there are no doubts) has long been somewhat problematical; and the attentive readers of the intercepted correspondence could not think more highly of it than Kleber and Dugua appeared to do.

While these scenes of treachery, fraud, and violence, were exhibiting in Egypt, the French were endeavouring to play a similar game in Europe. The Congress at Rastadt had been terminated in the Spring of 1799. By the treaty between Russia, Austria, and Great Britain, it had been stipulated, that an auxiliary force of twenty-three thousand men should be immediately supplied by the first of these powers to the second. The approach of these troops gave umbrage to the French Directory, who insisted that the Emperor should give immediate orders for putting a stop to their progress, and for sending them back to their own country. With this peremptory demand the Austrian Cabinet, of course, refused to comply. The Directory, therefore, by one of those scandalous breaches of good faith which had become familiar to them, without any previous notice, or any declaration of war, ordered their Generals, Jourdan and Massena, to make an incursion into Suabia, and the country of the Grisons. When the Directory thus ventured to renew the war, their force was

* Intercepted Letters from Egypt. *Part the Third.* P. 46.

greatly inferior to what it had been in former campaigns. Their immense losses, combined with other causes, had left them but 320,000 French troops on the Continent of Europe, which, with about 80,000 auxiliaries, or rather tributaries, of the different countries which they had subjugated, or, in their own jargon, *restored to liberty*, they hoped would suffice, not only to ensure all their conquests from the Texel to the Bay of Naples, but to enable them to add to the number.

Of these troops, about 45,000, under Massena, occupied Switzerland and the left bank of the Rhine, from its source to Basil. Between Basil and Dusseldorf, 65,000 men were stationed under Jourdan, and were called the army of Mentz. The same plan of operations was now to be attempted which had failed in former campaigns;—to unite the armies of Italy and Germany, and to invade the hereditary states of the House of Austria.

The Austrian army opposed to this force amounted to 185,000 men of whom about 60,000 were now in Italy, in the Friuli, and in Carynthia; 60,000, under the Archduke Charles, were stationed on the Lech; 20,000 were in the palatinate, and the neighbouring districts, under General Sztaray; the same number in the Voralberg and the Grisons, with General Hotze; and 25,000 were on the frontiers of the Grisons, and in the Tyrol, commanded by General Bellegarde. The commencement of hostilities by the French was preceded, as usual, by proclamations, replete with falsehoods, both from the Directory and from their Generals.

Massena's division obtained some advantage in the Grisons, and in the Tyrol; but nothing of a serious nature took place till the 21st of March, when, as the army of Jourdan, then in Suabia, and posted upon the two small rivers Asch and Ostrach, meditated an attack on the Archduke Charles, who was opposed to him, he was anticipated by the Austrians. A sharp action ensued, during which the French were driven from one position to another; and the Archduke was preparing, with his wonted activity and perseverance, to pursue his

advantage, when the close of day compelled him to postpone all farther operations till the ensuing morning. Jourdan, however, deemed it prudent to decamp in the night, and contriving to fall back for two successive days, he established himself, on the third, in a stronger position, with his right at Hohen-Tweil, his centre in front of Engen, and his left upon the heights of Tuttlingen, near the Danube. A corps on the other side of the Danube was stationed near Fredingen. The Archduke's vanguard had pursued Jourdan, and that Prince followed in person, and on the 22d of March, took up his head-quarters at Pfullendorf. Continuing to advance, the Archduke came up with the enemy on the 24th, and, having driven in several of their posts, established himself in the rear of Stockach. In this position Jourdan, anxious to effect a junction with Massena, beyond the lake of Constance, resolved to attack the Austrian army, on the 24th. At the beginning of the day he gained some advantages, and there was a point of time at which victory seemed within his grasp, but the skilful manœuvres of the Archduke restored the fortune of the day, and at length enabled him to repulse the French in every quarter. This battle was most obstinately contested; and the loss on both sides was great,—that of the Austrians exceeding 3,000, and that of the French amounting to 6,000. Jourdan made another vain attack the next day, but retreated in the night of the 26th. The Archduke pursued him, and, by the middle of April, he succeeded in driving the greater part of the French army out of Suabia. Jourdan was soon after recalled

Massena, meanwhile, had made a desperate effort to expel the Austrians from the Voralberg. On the 23d of March he attacked the strong position of Feldkirch, but, notwithstanding his great superiority of numbers, he paid for his temerity with three thousand of his men. The Archduke's operations were now to be directed against Switzerland, which country, it was hoped, might be rescued from the intolerable yoke which had been recently imposed on it. On the 13th of April, he drove the French out of Schaffhausen, where the celebrated bridge was burnt by them in their retreat, to the great regret of the surrounding country. In a few days, the other posts which they

occupied, on the right bank of the Rhine, were forced; when that river now became the line of division between the hostile armies.

By the middle of May, after several sharp actions, the Austrian Generals, Bellegarde and Hotze, had succeeded in expelling the French from the Grisons; when the former of these officers repaired to Italy. The war in Switzerland was continued by General Hotze, with whom the Archduke soon effected a junction. Massena, who had succeeded Jourdan in the chief command of the French army, was opposed to him. On the 27th of May, the Archduke defeated the French at Winterthur, and compelled them to fall back upon a strong position at Zurich. In another quarter the Austrians, under General Haddick, were equally successful in driving the French out of the Italian Bailiwicks, from the upper valley of the Ticino, and from the important passage of Mount St. Gothard.

The position which Massena had taken up in front of Zurich was exceedingly strong, both by nature and art. It was necessary, however, that the Archduke should drive him from it, or else forego all further attempts on the country which he had promised to rescue from oppression. On the third of June, he caused the right of the French to be attacked by his vanguard, which drove them from the villages which they occupied. But the grand attack was reserved for the next day. After a dreadful conflict, which lasted from morning till night, the Austrians succeeded in forcing the first line of the French entrenchments.—But they could proceed no farther; the redoubt and abbattis, still to be carried, being rendered impenetrable by the numbers and fire of the battalions and batteries with which they were lined. Here however, they passed the night; the Archduke resolving to renew the attack the following morning. But his troops were so fatigued by their continued exertions for so many hours, that he was obliged to postpone it to the following day. Fortunately he was spared that trouble, for Massena, alarmed, no doubt at the resolution which he had displayed, and at a perseverance which astonished him, decamped in the night of the fifth of June, and abandoned a position from which it would have been extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to drive

him. The loss was considerable, on both sides, in these two actions. The French Generals, Cherin, Oudinot, and Humbert, were wounded; the first, mortally.—The Austrian Generals, Hotze, Wallis, and Hiller, were also wounded. Massena retired to another strong position, on a chain of mountains, between the Limmatt and the Reuss. Here the Archduke did not feel himself in sufficient force to attack him, and both armies remained nearly in the same position, till the middle of August.

While the French were thus defeated in Germany, and held in check, at least, in Switzerland, they were destined to experience a reverse of fortune more decided, and disasters more serious, in a country which had, hitherto, formed the principal theatre of their military triumphs. The French army, in Italy, was now commanded by Scherer, who had resigned his post of War Minister in order to place himself at the head of it. He was stationed at the opening of the campaign, on the Mincio, while the Austrians, under General Kray, occupied a nearly parallel line on the Adige. By a mistaken policy, the Austrian Cabinet had resolved, in order to avoid the charge of aggression, not to strike the first blow, and they thus left to the enemy the inestimable advantage of chusing both time and place for the commencement of hostilities. As soon, then, as Scherer was apprized of the progress of Jourdan and Massena, the former of whom was stationed, with his left, on the Danube, and his right on the Lake of Constance, while the latter was in possession of the whole of the country of the Grisons, and had even penetrated into the Tyrol, he resolved to open the campaign. He advanced, in six divisions, containing about 45,000 men in the whole. The left, commanded by Moreau, attacked the right wing of the Austrians, and drove them from their posts, between the Lake of Garda and the Adige; carried the entrenched camp of Pastrengo, where they killed and took 2,500 men, and, pursuing their advantage, followed the Austrians over the river, and, extending themselves, as well towards Verona as towards the Tyrol, cut off the communication which the Austrians had established between the Upper and the Lower Adige. The centre of the French army, led by Scherer himself, attacked the chain of posts which covered Verona,

the pillage of which city had been promised to the army, in public orders, to satisfy them for the arrears of pay due to them. Scherer, however, found in General Kaim an opponent not much disposed to facilitate his schemes of plunder;—he experienced, in short, a resistance which set all his efforts at defiance, and, after fighting the whole day, with the loss of nearly 3,000 men, on either side, he could succeed in wresting from the Austrians only one of their positions, that of St. Lucia. During this time, the right of the French, which was ordered to attack and to burn the town of Legnago, where the Austrian advanced posts were stationed, were completely repulsed by General Kray; and, after losing 2,000 men in killed and wounded, with 600 prisoners, 11 pieces of cannon, and thirty-two tumbrils, having one General killed and another wounded, fled, with precipation, to Mantua. The defeat, however, of his right wing, induced the Austrian General to desist from the pursuit, and to reinforce the right of the centre division. The two armies now lay so near to each other, that, on the 29th of March, they were under the mutual necessity of concluding a suspension of arms, for the purpose of burying their dead, which had remained on the field since the battle of the 26th.

Two hours before this truce expired, on the 30th, 10,000 men of Moreau's division, led by General Serrurier, passed the Adige at Polo, and advanced to within half a league of Verona. Here however, they were attacked by a part of General Kray's force, detached for the purpose, with such spirit that they were soon compelled to retreat towards the bridge over which they had passed. But the Austrians pursued them with such rapidity as to cut off one of their columns, and to take 2,000 prisoners.

In these first seven days of the campaign, the French are stated to have lost the immense number of 10,000 men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners;—while the loss of the Austrians is calculated at about 5,000. The French were so dispirited by this unsuccessful beginning, that, on the 2d of April, 190 of their soldiers, and 23 officers, laid down

their arms, at Villa Franca, to seventeen Austrian light-horse;* and the number that deserted was considerable.

Scherer, who knew that the Russian auxiliaries, under Suworrow, were advancing, by rapid marches, to the scene of action, determined to risk another battle before their arrival. The Austrians, who had now passed the Adige, had equally resolved to attack the French, and to carry, if possible, their camp at Magnano. The fifth of April was the day fixed on by both for their grand attack; as they both advanced towards the same point, they soon met, and, by ten in the morning, the action had become general through the whole extent of the front of the line. For the first two hours the French had the advantage, and General Serrurier got possession of Villa Franca, where he maintained himself. The centre and the right of the French pushed on to the neighbourhood of Verona. But the timely arrival of nine battalions of the Austrian reserve, under General Latterman, turned the tide of victory, and soon put the French to flight. Scherer and Moreau exerted themselves to the utmost, to make an impression on the centre of the Austrians, in the hope of securing the advantage which had been lost, and they succeeded, at first, in compelling General Kaim to retreat to within half a league of Verona. Here, however, three battalions of grenadiers, under General Lusignan, forming the remainder of the Austrian reserve, arrived in time to give effectual support to their retiring comrades. The French were now compelled to retreat in their turn, and, being completely broken, were closely pursued by the Austrians, till the approach of night. The French, on this day, lost 6,500 men, of whom 3,000 were prisoners; with 17 pieces of cannon. Several of their Generals were wounded, and one, Pigeon, mortally. The numbers of the Austrians, killed and wounded, amounted to about 2,500; among the latter were three of their Generals, Mercantin, Kowasewich, and Ross.

Scherer, after this defeat, retreated beyond the Mincio, and first took up a position between that river and Goito. But some further successes,

* History of the Campaign of 1799, in Italy. P. 22.

gained by detached corps of the Austrians, under Generals Klenau and Wukassowich; together with the spirit displayed by the Italians, who, encouraged by the disasters of their enemies, had risen, in many places, and cut down the poisonous Tree of Liberty, induced Scherer to retreat still further; and he accordingly retired by Arola, behind the Chiesa, thus leaving the fortresses of Mantua and Peschiera to their fate.

On the 8th of April General Melas reached Italy, and took upon him the chief command, which, however, he only retained till the 16th, when he resigned it to Marshal Suworrow, who had then arrived with about 20,000 Russians. The united army amounted to 60,000 men, exclusive of the small corps detached upon the flanks. Leaving a sufficient number of troops, about 20,000, to blockade Peschiera and Mantua, the Russian commander advanced, on the 20th, in pursuit of the flying enemy, who retreated towards Piedmont, as well to secure the fortresses in that country, as to draw nearer the reinforcements which he expected from France and Switzerland. Scherer, however, was soon stripped of his command, which was given to Moreau. This General resolved to make a stand upon the Adda; but the allies having contrived to gain possession of a flying bridge, in the night of the 26th, which the French had neglected to guard with a sufficient force; and having established another, a part of their army passed over the river, and took an advantageous position at Brivio, an important point, situated at the end of the road leading from Milan to the lake of Como. Part of the centre of the allies crossed the Adda, fell upon General Serrurier's division, and drove it from St. Gervasso to Pozzo. These movements brought on a battle, which was fought between Brivio and Pozzo.—The French were defeated, and the next day the allies entered Milan. Serrurier's corps was afterwards pursued by General Wukassowich, who compelled them, to the number of 3,000 men, to lay down their arms, after a brave, but ineffectual, resistance. These actions cost the French 5,000 men, in prisoners, and 4,000 killed and wounded; the loss of the allies amounted to near 3000 men. They took from the French thirty-two pieces of cannon, on the field of battle, and a much greater number at Milan.

The total loss of the French, from the commencement of the campaign in Italy, was estimated at 30,000 men, so that Moreau had little more than 25,000 left to oppose to the victorious allies. He now fell back on the Po, and fixed his head quarters at Turin, where he repaired the fortifications of the citadel. Still, however, he resolved to dispute the possession of Italy with the allies, and for that purpose took a position extending from Alexandria, and the Tanaro, to Valentia and the Po.—Marshal Suworrow, having left 4,000 men, under General Latterman, to blockade the castle of Milan, pursued the French at the beginning of May. Moreau seemed resolved not to abandon the advantageous position which he occupied; while the commander of the allies, not deeming it advisable to attack it in front, determined to harass the flanks. This movement occasioned some partial actions, and, at length, obliged Moreau, at the expiration of a fortnight, to quit his post, to leave behind him the whole plain of Piedmont, and to remove his head-quarters to Coni.

Suworrow now pushed forward, and, on the 25th of May, encamped within a league of Turin. The next day the allies obtained possession of that city, the garrison having retired to the citadal. During this time, Moreau had been waiting in impatient expectation of being joined by General Macdonald, who had been ordered to quit his station in the kingdom of Naples, and to reinforce the army of Italy. Macdonald had traversed the intermediate country between Naples and Tuscany, with little molestation, and, at the latter end of May, proposed to effect the desired junction, on the banks of the Po. His army amounted to 25,000 men; and, if it could join Moreau, would enable him to make a stand against the allies, if not to resume offensive operations. Moreau, on his part, made the necessary movements to favour this attempt.—Macdonald, whose army had now been strengthened by the addition of a corps under General Victor, put his troops in motion on the eighth of June. On the tenth, a partial action took place, to the disadvantage of the French; but on the 12th, the superiority of their numbers over the corps of General Hohenzollern, which was opposed to them, prevailed; and, after a desperate battle, in which the French General Forest was killed, and Macdonald himself wounded, the Austrians retired behind the Po, and joined the corps there stationed with General Kray. On

the 15th of June Macdonald's army arrived at Piacenza. On the 17th he marched against General Ott, who, being greatly inferior in numbers, had continued to retire slowly before him; he came up with the advanced posts of the Austrians, beyond the little river Tidone; and while he was engaged in skirmishing with them, Marshal Suworrow, who had left Turin on the 12th, and Alexandria on the 15th, with about 20,000 men, arrived. The French were then repulsed, and lost a great number of men. The next day the two armies were again partially engaged, and the French were again beat. But, on the 19th, Macdonald, whose army was still equal to that of the allies, resolved to make a general attack on them. He paid dearly, however, for the attempt, for he was repulsed on all sides, and compelled to seek for safety in flight. He decamped in the night, and was briskly pursued, the next day, by the allies; the Russians overtook his rear-guard at Zena, and forced it to lay down its arms; while the Austrians were equally successful in the vicinity of Piacenza, where they made several thousand prisoners, among whom were four wounded Generals, Rusca, Salm, Olivier, and Chambrai.

In these four days, Macdonald had lost 4,000 men killed, and at least 10,000 prisoners, many of whom were wounded. That General continued his retreat, not without further loss, and measured back his steps to Tuscany. Moreau, meantime, had advanced with about 20,000 men; had raised the siege of Tortona, and had defeated the Austrian division under General Bellegarde; but, being unable to extend his operations, he retired, and established himself in the gorges of the Appenines. The citadel of Turin, meanwhile, surrendered to the allies, after a siege of eight days.

Marshal Suworrow was now enabled to unite the different divisions of his army, and, having been joined by some considerable reinforcements, he found himself, at the end of June, at the head of 90,000 men, with which he projected the recovery of Tuscany, and the reduction of Mantua, Tortona, and Alexandria. To this army the French had not more than 45,000 men to oppose, independent of the garrisons of these three fortresses. Macdonald, aware of his perilous situation, did not wait to be attacked, but, evacuating Tuscany, at length succeeded in

joining Moreau. The attention of the allies, in the month of July, was principally directed to the siege of those towns which the French still occupied in Italy. These were pushed on with vigour. On the 21st, they obtained possession of Alexandria, the garrison of which were made prisoners of war. On the 30th of that month, Mantua, with a garrison of 8,700 men, opened her gates to the besiegers, after the trenches had been opened only fourteen days.

It would be foreign from the purpose, and would greatly exceed the limits, of an historical sketch, to follow such a general as Marshal Suworrow through all the rapid and masterly movements of one of the most astonishing campaigns of which history affords an example. This narrative, therefore, must be confined to a brief notice of the remaining operations of the hostile armies. In August, Joubert, who had been appointed to supersede Moreau, assembled his troops, to the number of near 40,000, for the purpose of raising the siege of Tortona, which had not yet surrendered to the allies. Suworrow resolved to wait for them in the plain between the Scrivia and the Bormuda, where Joubert proposed to attack them on the 14th of August; but, having altered his intentions, and being loath to abandon an advantageous post which he occupied on the neighbouring hills, Suworrow, impatient of delay, and little accustomed to temporize, resolved to attack him in his post. Accordingly, at five in the morning of the 15th, Generals Kray and Bellegarde marched against the left of the French army, where Joubert commanded in person. The contest was maintained with the most determined courage, on both sides. About an hour after it began, Joubert was killed by a musquet ball; but still the French, rendered bold by the strength of their position, and the entrenchments which they had thrown up, defended themselves most resolutely, and defeated every attempt to dislodge them.

At nine o'clock Suworrow, with his Russians, about 13,000 in number, attacked in front the position of Novi; but the extreme steepness of the mountains, and the destructive fire which the French, in security themselves, were able to keep up against them, rendered unavailing the desperate intrepidity of his infantry, who were repulsed with a heavy loss. At eleven, the whole French line preserved its station unbroken

and unmoved; it looked down, in conscious security, from its almost inaccessible heights, and seemed to bid defiance to the enemy below.—But Suworrow was not to be discouraged by difficulties, however formidable, nor yet by checks, however severe. Three fresh attacks were made in the course of the afternoon, but still with no better success than the first. When the day was far advanced, the Austrian General, Melas, who commanded one division of the allies, by a masterly movement, attained the object which every attempt to accomplish had hitherto proved fruitless. He marched up the left bank of the Scrivia, sent a detachment across the river to keep a French column in check, and so manœuvred as to outflank the right wing of the enemy's main army. This brought on an engagement, in which, after some hard fighting, the Austrians forced the central position of the French at Novi. The flight of the enemy was intercepted by the Prince of Lichtenstein, and the greater part of their rear guard was cut off. The French, in this action, lost 8000 men, killed and wounded, 4,000 prisoners, and 32 pieces of cannon. That of the allies amounted to 7,000, of which six hundred only were made prisoners.

After the battle of Novi, Moreau retreated into the Genoese territory, and the garrison of Tortona engaged to surrender if not relieved by the 8th of September. The plan of operations originally determined on by the Cabinet of Vienna, was, that as soon as Marshal Suworrow should be able to leave Italy in safety, he should repair to Switzerland, where, joining the Austrians to be left there by the Archduke Charles, and a large body of Russians, which arrived about the middle of August, he should endeavour to complete the conquest of that country; that, while the Marshal should be thus engaged in the centre, the Archduke, on the right, should attempt some important enterprize on the Rhine; and that, on the left, the Austrian corps, stationed in the Duchy of Aoasta, and on the frontier of Le Valais, should make an active diversion, while the army of General Melas should keep in check the French force under Championnet and Moreau, in the maritime and French Alps.

The moment for carrying this plan into execution had now arrived, and Suworrow, who had received orders to this effect, towards the end

of August, prepared to obey them as soon as he should have opened the gates of Tortona to the Austrians. Accordingly, when that event took place, he set out with his Russians, now reduced to about 17,000 men, from Asti, and directed his course towards Novarra and the Italian bailiwicks. He marched with such rapidity, that, in five days, he advanced one hundred and sixteen miles, and reached Taverna, near Bellinzona, on the 15th of September. Here he was promised that horses and mules should be ready for him to transport his baggage across the mountains; but, through the gross neglect of the Austrian Generals, on whom the execution of these promises depended, or else from a cause still more dishonourable, nothing was prepared for him. This occasioned a fatal delay of three days, passed in vain endeavours to procure horses; and he was, at last, reduced to the necessity of dismounting his Cossacks, and of employing their horses to transport his baggage. On the 24th, he reached Mount St. Gothard, where he found the first post of the French, who were immediately driven in by some Austrian light troops, who had joined the Marshal, under the gallant Colonel Strauch. On the 25th, the Russian army traversed the valley of Reuss, and arrived in the evening beyond Wasen. On the 27th, Suworrow pushed his advanced guard across the Culmerberg, as far as Mutten, where he received a dispatch from the Austrian General, Lincken, who had been destined to co-operate with him, apprizing him of the events which had recently occurred in Switzerland, and which entirely frustrated the whole expedition.

The Russian General, Korsakow, who was destined to reinforce Suworrow, in Switzerland, had entered that country, with an army of 28,000 men, including the emigrants under the Prince of Condè, about the middle of August, and immediately advanced to the Archduke's camp before Zurich. By this junction the allies became greatly superior to the French, and were, indeed, perfectly competent to the accomplishment of the grand object of the campaign in this quarter, the recovery of Switzerland from the French, and the extension of hostilities to the very frontiers of France. The Russian Commander, Korsakow, accordingly pressed the Archduke to attack Massena without delay.—But, by a crooked and mysterious policy, the object of which it is not easy to conjecture, the Austrian Cabinet, to its eternal disgrace be it recorded,

had restrained the Archduke, by secret orders, from pursuing the very plan which had been previously concerted. That Prince, therefore, instead of acceding to the proposal of Korsakow, drew off 30,000 of his troops, with which he returned to Germany, under the pretence of checking the incursions of the French, who had made an irruption into that country. He left, however, 20,000 men under General Hotze, whose head-quarters were at Kaltsbrun ; and the Russians took possession of the camp before Zurich. Massena, who was apprized of the approach of Suworrow, resolved to make a grand attack on the allies before the Marshal could reach the scene of action. This took place on the 25th of September. Unfortunately, the brave General Hotze was killed early in the day, as he was employed in reconnoitring the enemy; and, Korsakow, and his Russians, after performing prodigies of valour, sustained a total defeat, and were compelled to retreat beyond the Rhine.

This was the discouraging account which Suworrow now received; an account which marred all his hopes, and frustrated all his plans. In this dilemma, he resolved to pass through the vallies of Mutten and Clonthal, into the canton of Glarus, there to join General Lincken; flattering himself that, on the news of his arrival, and of the departure of Massena to engage him, Generals Korsakow and Petrarch might be enabled to retrace their steps, and that every thing might still be retrieved; with this impression he wrote to the Russian Generals in Korsakow's army:—"You will answer with your heads for every farther step that you retreat; I am coming to repair your faults."

Massena, finding Suworrow in this forlorn situation, looked on him as a certain prize, and disposed his army in such a manner as to intercept his progress, and to prevent his intended junction with the Austrian General. But, notwithstanding the vast superiority of his force, he found the task he had undertaken most difficult to execute. Instead of crushing Suworrow at a blow, as he had expected, he paid dearly for the attempt, and was constantly defeated in every attack which he made on the Russians, on their march. Suworrow, after encountering incredible difficulties, subduing the greatest obstacles, and sustaining the most

incessant fatigue, made good his retreat, and reached the valley of the Rhine, with 14,000 of his brave and hardy followers.

Thus, by the mistaken and despicable policy of the House of Austria, was one of the noblest projects for the emancipation of Europe from French tyranny, which the wisdom of man could have formed, frustrated, at the very moment when success was within the grasp of those who had undertaken its accomplishment. This admirable plan of operations had been settled by the British and Russian Cabinets, with the approbation of Austria; it had for its object the expulsion of the French from the whole of Italy, Piedmont, Switzerland, and Holland; and the transfer of the seat of war to the frontiers of their own country. It was a plan, grand in conception, and displaying the combined talents of the Statesman and the General. It appeared, indeed, too vast and gigantic for execution; but the events which it produced sufficiently demonstrated the adequacy of the means employed for the purpose, while they proved that, though it ultimately failed, its failure was solely imputable to the want of will, and not to the want of power, to render it successful. In the Neapolitan dominions, the inhabitants, protected by the British fleet, and headed by a patriotic Cardinal, Ruffo, wrested the capital of their country from the usurped authority of its foreign enemies; and the French were ultimately compelled to evacuate the kingdom. Tuscany also was delivered from her oppressors, and the power of her lawful sovereign restored. Every where, the people, secured from danger by the triumph of the allies, displayed their enmity to the French, and rose in arms against them; the strongest fortresses were reduced; the most powerful armies defeated; and the discomfited and dispirited foe was compelled to seek for shelter and for safety in the deep recesses of the Alps and the Appenines. A great portion of Switzerland was recovered; and the country of William Tell was on the eve of witnessing the joyful restoration of her liberties and laws. A force adequate to the final accomplishment of this desirable event was collected on the spot. The allies were in possession of the most advantageous posts; and nothing but the word of command was wanting to hurl destruction on the fell destroyers of Helvetic freedom. It must not be pretended, then, that the plan of the combined powers was either rashly conceived, or imprac-

ticable to execute. Had the Archduke Charles been left to exercise his own judgment, and to act according to his own discretion, the glory which had signalized the progress of this brilliant campaign would have continued to mark its termination. But, unfortunately for the interests of Europe, and the welfare of the civilized world, he was subject to the influence and direction of a Cabinet, which was swayed by other motives than those which it thought proper to avow; and his military operations were controlled by the decisions of an Aulic Council, which, remote from the scene of action, decided on the course of events, and left the commander of the army no power to profit by occurrences as they arose. These circumstances are sufficient to account for the otherwise unaccountable conduct of the Austrian General; to whose unseasonable departure from Switzerland the disastrous issue of the campaign was exclusively imputable.

One part of this plan, the recovery of Holland, it was left to the English to execute. The force destined for this expedition consisted of about 33,000 men, including a body of Russians, and the whole was to be placed under the Duke of York. The first division of this army, commanded by Sir Ralph Abercrombie, sailed from Deal, with a naval force under Admiral Mitchell, on the thirteenth of August. The wind, which was fair at first, became variable, and violent gales ensued, so that transports did not reach the Dutch coast till the twentieth, when they were becalmed. The military and naval commanders now went on board Lord Duncan's ship, and concerted their plan of attack against the Helder and the Zuyder-Zee, and ten sail of the line were detached from the main fleet, and entrusted to Admiral Mitchell, for executing the naval part of the intended operations. Preparations were made for landing the army on the twenty-second; but, most unfortunately, the wind suddenly changed, and continued to blow with great and unabated violence till the evening of the twenty-fifth. By the delay thus occasioned, the enemy, who had, at first, only 1300 men at the Helder, had time to collect a powerful force to oppose the landing of the troops, which did not take place till the twenty-seventh. The Dutch General, Daendels, had now assembled upwards of 10,000 men, between the Helder and Haarlem, upon a line of about thirty-six miles in extent.

The English, however, succeeded in landing, in the morning of the twenty-seventh, and, having drawn up on the shore, repulsed several attacks which the enemy made on them in the course of the day. The action lasted, with some intervals of repose, from five in the morning till four in the afternoon. It cost the Dutch 1400 men, killed, wounded, and taken, including thirty-seven officers; while the English had 50 killed, three of whom were officers, 371 wounded, and 26 missing. The Dutch General evacuated the posts of the Helder on the succeeding day, and left Sir Ralph Abercrombie at liberty to land his artillery, and to complete his preparations for advancing into the country. On the twenty-eighth, General Don's division, consisting of 5000 men, reached the Dutch coast, and joined the army. During these occurrences on shore, Admiral Mitchell entered the Texel, and summoned the Dutch fleet to surrender to the Prince of Orange. After some hesitation, Admiral Story, seeing no prospect of a successful resistance, consented to yield, and the Orange flag was hoisted on board his ships. Thus was the last blow given to the Dutch navy; and a very important part of the expedition completed without the loss of a single man.

On the first of September, General Abercrombie took a more advanced position, from which Daendels had previously retired; but in the interval a body of French troops had arrived at Alkmaar, and General Brune had taken the command of the united army of Dutch and French, which amounted to about 20,000 men, and was in daily expectation of farther reinforcements. Brune, knowing the actual superiority of his own force, resolved to make a general attack on the English before the remainder of their troops should arrive. This accordingly took place, at break of day, on the tenth of September; but the enemy met with so warm a reception, that, after losing 2000 men, of whom 1200 were French, they retired with precipitation, from every point, at ten o'clock. The loss of the English in this action amounted to 77, of whom 34 were killed, and the rest wounded or taken. General Abercrombie preserved the position which he had so ably defended, till the arrival of the remainder of the army, which disembarked on the twelfth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of September. The Duke of York having, by this time, reached Holland, now took the

command of the united army of British and Russians, amounting to 33,000 men, of whom 1200 were cavalry.

The delays which had already taken place had a material effect on the ultimate success of the expedition, while it rendered it absolutely necessary to lose no farther time, but to commence the military operations without delay. On the nineteenth the allies resolved to attack the enemy's chain of posts, and the necessary dispositions were made for that purpose. But the imprudent courage of the Russians, who formed the right column of the army, in advancing two hours before the appointed time, in the dark, and pushing on in the most brave, but most irregular, manner, equally regardless of danger and of order, rendered the successful attacks of the other columns of no avail, and defeated the whole plan. After suffering considerably by their rashness, they were compelled to retreat, neither could they be prevailed on to return, when the Duke of York had, by carrying several posts in their rear, secured them from farther attack, and supplied the means of turning the fortune of the day. After displaying the greatest bravery, the whole army were, by this inconsiderate conduct, obliged to return to the position which they had occupied the preceding night. The English lost, on this occasion, 1006 men; 117, including five officers, were killed; the loss of the Russians amounted to 2970, of whom 1225 were prisoners. The loss of the enemy was still more considerable, as no less than 3000 prisoners fell into the hands of the British. The Russian Generals, Hermann and Soutchoff, were wounded; and General Gerebzeff was killed.* It was now pretty evident that the opportunity for making any material impression had been suffered to escape. The French received daily reinforcements, and had sufficient time to increase their means of attack and of defence; while the country, from being intersected by dykes and canals, was peculiarly unfavourable to an invading army; the people of Holland, too, evinced little or no dispo-

* General Essen, in his report of this battle to his sovereign, imputes the failure of the attack on the enemy's posts to the circumstance of part of the army having begun to advance *two hours too late*: instead of admitting that it was solely imputable to the disobedience of orders on the part of the Russians, in marching *two hours too soon*.

sition to render assistance to the allies; and, unlike their ancestors, in former times, whatever might be their sentiments, they preferred the indolence which oppression favours, to the active exertion which the restoration of liberty requires. In addition to these disadvantages, of themselves sufficiently formidable, the inclemency of the season, which was particularly wet and stormy, still multiplied their obstacles, and retarded their operations. It was not till the second of October that the army was enabled to move forward. On that day, a plan of attack was formed on a more contracted scale than the former; it was to be confined to a space between the canal of Alkmaar, and to be directed against the left wing of the enemy, which was principally composed of French. As the Duke of York had lately received some reinforcements, which supplied the void occasioned by his late losses, he was enabled to employ 30,000 men upon this service. The Russians, under General Essen, were to act in the centre, and the English on the two wings. The object of the attack was not merely to advance and gain ground, but to cut off a large body of the enemy, and so to weaken the French in particular, as to disable them for taking the field for some time. A severe contest ensued, in which the English maintained their military character, repulsing the enemy in every quarter, and driving them from every position; but the obstinacy of the Russian General, by preventing the complete success of the day, rendered this effusion of blood useless and unavailing. As in the former action, the Russians, by their imprudent courage, and ill-regulated zeal, had advanced too soon and too far to act in concert with, and to secure support from, the English; so, on the present occasion, as if resolved to avoid the repetition of a similar error, they fell into the opposite extreme. They would not advance one inch, till fully supported by the British divisions; and when the French were driven, about eleven o'clock, from their position between Schorel and Schoreldam, and had retreated to Bergen, the Russians pertinaciously refused to advance any farther, but remained, for the rest of the day, between the two first of these places, keeping up an useless cannonade on the last. The English on the wings, after a sharp and bloody conflict, had carried every thing before them, and now was the time for reaping the fruit of these first advantages; but the obstinate refusal of the Russians to advance rendered it impracticable to make the projected

attack upon Bergen, and to cut off the French column, which was nearly turned, and was hastily retreating. The troops then, remaining masters of the field, lay on their arms that night, during which the French evacuated Bergen, and retired to a stronger post in their rear. On this day the English had 237 killed, and 1102 wounded; the Russians lost 170 killed and taken, and 423 wounded. The loss of the French was estimated at 3000. Sir Ralph Abercrombie had two horses shot under him in the action; Major Lumsdaine, of the 55th, was killed; and Major-General Moore, and Lord Huntley, were among the wounded.

On the sixth, the Duke of York had resolved to advance still further forward, and to make a fresh attack on the enemy, who, on his part, had determined to attack the English. This mutual determination brought on a general action sooner than was intended, which ended, like the last, in leaving the English and their allies in the possession of the field, and in expelling the French from some of their posts. But still no decisive advantage was gained; no impression was made on *the country*; the people had not risen against their oppressors; every new victory diminished the allied force, while the loss of the enemy was speedily supplied; and, besides, when driven from one post, he could retreat to another; while the allies could not advance without fighting for every inch of territory. It was evident the force under the Duke of York was utterly inadequate to the conquest of Holland; the season was far advancing; the roads were bad; and, in short, the whole prospect was so discouraging, that it was deemed expedient to abandon the project altogether, and to think of nothing but the means of securing a retreat. In the evening of the seventh, then in front of Alkmaar, he made a retrograde movement, and reached Zype by day break, leaving behind him only 50 wounded English and Russians, who were not in a state to be removed, and whom General Brune afterwards multiplied into 600. The moment Brune was apprized of the retreat of the allies, he put his army in motion to harass them. On the tenth of October, the Dutch General, Daendels, attacked with vigour the left of the allies; but Prince William of Gloucester, who had the command of it, maintained his position during the greater part of the day, though he had only 1200 men to resist the assaults of 6600 of the enemy. On the fourteenth,

the allies took up the same position which they had occupied on the second; and they adopted every practicable means for giving it additional strength.

That the act of embarking a retreating army in the face of a superior, or even of a formidable, though inferior, force, is one of the most difficult and hazardous of all military operations, it requires no knowledge of the art of war to understand. The situation of the allies, then, was perilous; having abandoned the prospect of conquering Holland, to return to their own country was now their sole object. The only question left for consideration, then, was how to embark the army with the greatest practicable security. Here two modes presented themselves: the first arose from the local situation of the army, which left them in possession of the great sea dikes, as well as the interior dikes, and thus enabled them to lay the whole of North Holland under water; they had it also in their power to render the navigation of the Zuyder-zee impracticable. The other mode was, by negotiating with the enemy for leave to evacuate the country without molestation. But the former of these means, it was evident, should have been made subservient to the latter. The allies possessed infinite advantages in the ability to injure the enemy; and the voluntary resignation of such advantages justified the demand for some privilege or benefit in exchange. By the inundation, the country would be rendered useless and desolate for a considerable time; it was, therefore, most decidedly the interest of the French, who derived the sole advantage from its possession, to prevent, by almost any sacrifices, a measure so destructive. They had, independently of the injury which they would themselves sustain, by the loss of contributions and other resources from the inundation, a farther and a stronger inducement, inasmuch as it was their interest to keep the people whom they held in subjugation in a state of tranquillity, and nothing could tend more to inflame their minds against the French, than the knowledge that the great losses and inconveniencies which they suffered from the inundation had arisen from the obstinacy of the French, in refusing to suffer the allies quietly to evacuate the country; and a free and unconditional evacuation, therefore, was what the English General had a right to command, and what it was the interest of the

French General to allow. Such, however, was not the issue of the negotiation which the Duke of York opened with General Brune, through the medium of General Knox, on the fifteenth of October; and which, after some strange proposals from the French Commander, which he never expected to be admitted, was finally concluded, at Alkmaar, on the 18th of that month. By this convention, the allies obtained permission to evacuate the country on or before the 30th of November, on condition of releasing eight thousand French and Batavian prisoners, to be selected by the two governments, without exchange. The prisoners taken on both sides, during the campaign, were to be exchanged. The army embarked within the limited time; and thus terminated an expedition which had been planned under the most happy auspices, which afforded, in its progress, many opportunities for the display of British courage, but which ended in disappointment, if not (in respect only of the *terms* of the convention) in disgrace. The force employed was certainly inadequate to the attempt; and the period fixed upon for the execution of the plan was delayed greatly beyond that season when it was most likely, from a combination of various causes, to be productive of success.

The Dutch Colony of Surinam had, during these transactions, voluntarily surrendered itself, on the 20th of August, to a British force under Lord Hugh Seymour.

CHAPTER XLI.

French Affairs—Unconstitutional proceedings of the Directory—They violate the Elective Franchise—Annul the returns of their opponents in the two Councils—Propose to confiscate the property of the transported Legislators—Manly speech of Rouchon on the Question—Charges the attempt with exceeding in cruelty the ferocious deeds of Heliogabalus and Nero—Defends the Exiles on the ground that they had been condemned without Trial—Riot in the Council—Rouchon *hooted out* of the Hall—Proposal of the Directory adopted—False accusations of England by the Directory—Misrepresent the Battle of the Nile—They are hated by the People—Are all turned out of office, except Barras—The Abbè Sieyes one of the new Directory—Forms the plan of a new Revolution—Buonaparté's return to France entirely his own act—Strange conduct of the Directory towards him—Conference between Sieyes, Buonaparté, and Rœderer—The Councils removed to Saint Cloud—The command of the armed force given to Buonaparté—Barras resigns his seat in the Directory—Infidelity of the Directorial Guard—Buonaparté enters the Council of Elders—Is questioned as to his views—Reviles the Council—His speech—Remarks on it—He harangues the Troops, and excites them to revolt—Proceedings in the Council of Five Hundred—The members take a new oath of fidelity to the Constitution—Buonaparté enters their Hall—An universal clamour ensues—An attempt is made to stab him with a dagger—He is rescued by the Grenadiers—Conduct of Lucien Buonaparté, President of the Council of Five Hundred—Speech of Tallot—The Members are expelled from their Hall by the Troops, with fixed bayonets—The Council of Elders declare themselves the entire Legislative Body—Memorable speech of Boulay de la Meurthe The Constitution annihilated, and a Consular Government established—New oath administered to all Public Officers—Reflections on the constant violation of oaths by the French—Buonaparté made (by himself) First Consul—Meeting of the British Parliament—Means taken for recruiting the Army—Supplies voted for Three Months—Parliament adjourned for the holidays—Buonaparté's Letter to the King, on the subject of Peace—Supposed object of it—Reasons for doubting the Consul's sincerity—Lord Grenville's answer—The Consul's reply—Talleyrand's falsehoods and contradictions confuted by the declarations of his Brother Patriots, Robespierre and Brissot—The subject discussed in Parliament—The Duke of Bedford and Lord Holland defend the First Consul, and arraign the British Ministry—Conduct of the Cabinet supported by Lord Grenville—Debates in the Commons—Address moved by Mr. Dundas—Opposed by Mr. Whitbread—Mr. Whitbread's errors corrected by Mr. Canning—Mr. Erskine condemns the con-

duct of Ministers—Mr. Pitt's speech—Confutes the arguments of Mr. Erskine—Takes a comprehensive view of the question of aggression—Shews the arguments of Mr. Erskine to have been extracted from his pamphlet, which had been long since confuted—Mr. Pitt asserts the rigid neutrality of this Country towards France previous to the War—States the causes of the failure of the last negotiation—Considers the conduct of France to the Powers of the continent—Describes the ruling principles of the French Revolution—Delineates the Character and Conduct of Buonaparté—Proves the necessity of entering into his personal character in the present discussion—That character affords no security for the observance of treaties—Mr. Pitt combats the objections of Mr. Tierney—Mr. Nichol's observations on the scarcity of Corn answered by Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt justifies the Cabinet against the charge of Inconsistency, in having negotiated in 1797 with France, and in refusing to negotiate at the present moment—He is answered by Mr. Fox—Address approving of the conduct of Ministers carried by [illegible] against 64—Subsidy to Foreign Powers—Opposed by [illegible] Tierney, Mr. [illegible], and [illegible] William Smith—Supported by Mr. Pitt—Granted by the House—Motion for compelling Ministers to open a negotiation with France rejected by both Houses—The Budget—Motions relative to the Dutch Expedition, by Lord Holland, and Mr. Sheridan, negatived—Renewal of the Suspension Bill—Bill for preventing the consumption of New Bread—Sir Henry Mildmay introduces a Bill for preventing British Subjects from taking the veil—Supported by Mr. Pitt—Opposed by Mr. Windham—Observations on the conduct of Mr. Burke's Friends on all subjects relating to the Papists—Bill passes the Commons—Is rejected by the Lords—Bill for preventing the marriage of an Adultress with the object of her criminal Attachment, brought into the Upper House by Lord Auckland—Debate on the subject—The Bill supported by Lord Eldon, Lord Grenville, and most of the Bishops—Opposed by the Duke of Clarence, Lords Westmoreland and Mulgrave—Remarks on an extraordinary passage in a Speech of the Duke of Clarence—Thoughts on this Discussion.

[1799-1800.] While the French Republic was carrying on a military campaign in Italy, Germany, and Switzerland, with varied success, a political campaign, of still greater consequence, had been opened at Paris and St. Cloud, by the General who had so basely deserted his post in Egypt. During the absence of this man from his adopted country, or rather from the country which, to her sorrow, had adopted him, continual feuds, as might naturally be expected, prevailed both in the legislative councils, and in the Directorial Cabinet of the Republic. In April 1798, the election of that third of the legislative body which was to be annually renewed took place; and the Directory, conscious that their tyranny, and frequent violations of the law, had rendered them obnoxious to the people, were fearful

that the returns would not be such as would be favourable to the stability of their own power. They soon betrayed their fears, and endeavoured, but in vain, to adopt some means for averting the evil which they dreaded to encounter. Not being able to prevent the electors from exercising their rights without having recourse to another massacre of the people, which they deemed too dangerous an experiment, in the present temper of the country, they adopted another measure, equally unconstitutional, and annulled, with the assistance of their creatures in the two councils, all the returns in seven departments, and further declared the returns of several individual members to be illegal. Their next step was to violate, or rather to annihilate, what little remained of the freedom of the Press, by the suppression of twelve of the daily papers. All these acts of violence and outrage were committed under pretence that the persons elected in the one instance, and the conductors of the papers in the other, were enemies to the constitution. The next step which these Directorial Sages ascended on the ladder of Terrorism, was the proposal of a law for confiscating the property of the deputies who had been transported to Guiana, in September, 1797, and many of whom had found their way back to Europe;—and for *compelling* them to return to Rochefort, to learn, from the magistrate there, what prison they should be confined in, and to what place they should be again transported for life. This proposal, which was as ludicrous as it was atrocious, was deemed so necessary by the obsequious councils, that they were going to put it to the vote without the smallest discussion of its justice or expediency. One member, however, Rouchon, the member for Ardêche, in the council of five hundred, had the honesty to reprobate the infamous project, and to expose its flagrant injustice in strong and appropriate terms. He stigmatized the attempt to carry it as exceeding, in cruelty, any of the ferocious deeds of Heliogabalus or Nero. The partisans of the Directory were so enraged at this just representation of the case, that they insisted on commiting the unfortunate orator to prison. But Rouchon had intrepidity enough, notwithstanding the numerous instances which he had witnessed, in which such a threat had been carried into execution, to continue his truly patriotic harangue. He told the council, that the decree under

discussion was more formidable to them, even, than to the proscribed deputies; as it subverted the very foundations of a representative government. He stated, with equal truth, that, by the banishment of the deputies to Guiana, they had removed, to a great distance, a number of men whom they considered as dangerous, but that they could not deprive them of their property, as *criminals*, because they had not been brought to trial. It was monstrous, he said, to use the words *justice* and *humanity*, in the same breath with confiscations and proscriptions, without trial or judgment. It was the conduct of a man who grinned while he stabbed his victim. Notwithstanding the violent outcries which these manly observations called forth, Rouchon continued in this strain for some time, and, arguing most logically, remarked, that in no state, subject to laws, was any one held to be a criminal before he had been legally tried and convicted; but the deputies had been banished the year before, without conviction or trial; *therefore*, they were either banished, in violation of the constitution, or there was no constitution to be violated.

The promulgation of these bold truths and manly sentiments created one of those boisterous scenes which were peculiar to the legislative discussions of Republican France. He had continued his speech amidst constant interruptions, and repeated calls for sending him to prison, and for banishing him to Guiana;—and it required no common resolution to face such clamorous opponents, to brave such serious dangers. Yet, alone and unsupported, he remained till the close of the debate, or, more properly speaking, of the clamour; when, finding the council deaf to reason, and blind to truth, he quitted the hall; upon which the whole body of grave legislators waved their hats in the air, and expressed their joy, by tumultuous shouts of exultation!—The discussion was renewed on a subsequent day, when Crochon, member for the department of the Eure, arraigned Rouchon, with great severity, for having the *impudence* to presume that men might be innocent who had not been proved to be guilty. Rouchon, however, contented himself with telling him he was an *ass*. The decree, with all its oppressive provisions, soon passed, with only six or seven dissentient voices!

The Directory, and the two Councils, spared no efforts to excite a most inveterate prejudice against the English, of whom the most infamous falsehoods were propagated. They were charged with the most cruel treatment of their prisoners, and the assertions in an English paper were adduced in support of the charge; the utter falsehood of which was demonstrated by the Parliamentary inquiry which took place. When the news of Buonaparté's past successes in Egypt was received at Paris, nothing could exceed the exultation which it excited. The Directory hailed it as the certain presage of the downfall of the British empire. This joy was a little damped by the destruction of their fleet at Aboukir; but, for this loss, they soon consoled themselves, by the reflection, that the French had established, beyond all doubt, their superior courage, and that the English were only indebted for their success to the superiority of their numbers. The tyrannical conduct of the Directory, their profligate rapacity, luxury, and wealth, rendered them odious to the great majority of the people; and created a strong party against them in the two Councils. At the period of election, the 18th of June, 1799, these republican Sovereigns were stripped of their robes of office; Barras was the only one of them who was suffered to remain in power; and he secured for his associates, Gohier, formerly a lawyer at Rennes, a decided Jacobin, who had been appointed Minister of Justice, in 1793, by the National Convention; and who afterwards acted as President of the Criminal Tribunal of the department of the Seine; Roger du Cos, who had been a member of the National Convention, where he voted for the death of the King; President of the Jacobin Club, during the reign of terror; a violent enemy of the Girondists; and who was President of the Council of Elders, when sentence of banishment was pronounced on a number of deputies; and to the part which he played on that occasion, he was principally indebted for his present promotion; Moulin, a Jacobin General, of little repute; and the crafty Abbè Sieyes. The Abbè, indeed, was supposed to be the grand projector of this change in the Government; and it was by his arts that he procured four colleagues to be appointed, from whose abilities, resolution, and character, he could have nothing to fear.

These men had enjoyed their new dignity but little more than three

months, when Buonaparté arrived at Frejus, in Provence. Instead of being received as a deserter who had violated his duty, who ought to be punished for deserting his post in a most disgraceful manner, he was hailed, by the frivolous and inconstant French, as a hero entitled to praise, and deserving of reward. Long before Buonaparté's return to Paris, the wily Sieyes had deeply meditated on a new revolution. He perceived, very clearly, that the Directorial system was radically defective, and that nothing like a solid Government could be [illegible] without an unity of the Executive power. With the same secret zeal, and silent industry, with which he had laboured to vest, in the hands of Robespierre, the power of a Dictator, had he endeavoured, for more than a year, to secure, if possible, for himself, the possession of supreme power. He had, indeed, been aware that his plan could never be successful without the active co-operation of some popular General. And he had fixed his eye upon Joubert, as a proper man for his purpose. But the death of that General rendered it necessary to search for another coadjutor, and he was still in doubt, when the unexpected return of Buonaparté immediately fixed his choice.

It has been supposed, and the supposition has been adopted by some, and converted into certainty by others, that Buonaparté's return from Egypt, at this conjuncture, was the result of some private information which he had recently received from his brothers, or partisans in Paris. But there exists not, as far as my researches have enabled me to ascertain the fact, the smallest grounds for such an idea. It has been shewn, indeed, by a letter of his own, that it never was his intention to remain long in Egypt; and it is highly probable that, if he had not been allured by the reported treasures of Ghezza Pacha, he would have left all the glory to be acquired, by the siege of Acra, to others, and have really passed the winter either in Burgundy, or at Paris. It would appear, that he had received no other intelligence from Europe, than what he collected from the perusal of some German papers which he, accidentally, obtained. The deplorable state of his army, and the impracticability of realizing his ambitious hopes, after the defeat and disgrace which he had experienced at Acra, were, most likely, the immediate causes which hastened his departure from Egypt. Without Buonaparté, then, it is

highly probable a similar scene to that which was now exhibited, would have taken place, under the direction of Sieyes, and, possibly, Lucien Buonaparté might have played the principal part.—If so, it is much to be lamented that Buonaparté did not perish in the deserts of Arabia, since his brother, there is reason to believe, would have shuddered to commit the acts of tyranny, and the atrocious crimes, which have marked every period of the iron reign of Napoleone; although he did not shrink from the execution of measures without which the opportunity for committing those crimes could not have occurred.

The conduct of the Directory towards Buonaparté is utterly unaccountable on any other principle than that of fear. If they knew that the army was so devoted to him, as to obey any commands which he might chuse to issue, and dreaded the direction of the military power against themselves, it was natural enough that they should disguise any resentment which they might feel towards him, and treat him with apparent courtesy. But, in this case, they must have been woefully deficient in political skill, and even in common prudence. For, in possession of supreme power, with the leaders of the army attached to them, and certainly not well disposed to Buonaparté, they might easily have prevented all intercourse between the Corsican and the troops, and have been enabled to discharge their duty in safety. What that duty was, stupidity itself could not but perceive. Buonaparté had deserted his post, and returned to France without leave; he was guilty, therefore, of a high military offence; and the Directory ought to have put him under arrest, the moment they were informed of his arrival, and to have brought him to trial by a court-martial. Such conduct would have been sanctioned by the constitution; and there was little reason to dread any opposition from any quarter; for, although Buonaparté has been, most falsely, represented as, at this time, "the idol of France, and the admiration of the world,"* it is most certain that, had the Directory and the two councils been guided by men of common sense, and of common resolution, in opposing the pretensions, and the efforts, of his partisans, his projects would have been completely defeated, and he

* Annual Register for 1800, p. 11.

would have met that ignominious death which he has so frequently, and so richly, deserved, on a scaffold. Instead, however, of meeting with merited punishment, the assassin experienced unmerited honours; and was destined to act for some time longer, as the scourge of France, and the curse of the civilized world.

Buonaparté and Sieyes had now frequent interviews, to which Rœderer, formerly a judge in the Parliament of Metz, afterwards one of the firmest adherents to Robespierre, was admitted as an useful associate, and as an adept in the art of making revolutions. The members of the two councils, whom Sieyes had engaged in his interest, had frequent secret meetings, at which Lucien Buonaparté presided. There was a power vested in the council of elders, (by the *last* new constitution of the Republic) to change the place of residence for the legislative bodies whenever they thought proper; a provision introduced at the suggestion of the Abbè Sieyes, with a view, as it was afterwards supposed, to some such event as that which was now in contemplation. This power the council resolved to exercise, and, without the smallest communication with the Directory, determined to remove to Saint Cloud, where the scene about to be played, would, it was supposed, experience less interruption, than in the turbulent city of Paris. At the same time, the council conferred the command in chief of the whole military force in and about the capital, on Buonaparté, charging him to see the resolution of the council carried into effect. Thus every thing, so far, answered the views of the conspirators. Barras was persuaded to resign his seat in the Directory, but Gohier and Moulin, who were still in the Directory, sent an order to Lefebre to surround the house of Buonaparté with a strong detachment of the Directorial guard. Had this order been given on the Corsican's first arrival at Paris, by a majority of the Directory, and followed by a summary trial, their disgrace might have been prevented; but it was now too late. Lefebre informed the Directors that he himself was subject to the command of Buonaparté, and they found that their own guard, imitating the conduct of the Commander in Chief, had deserted their post, and joined his standard. Moulin jumped out of a window and escaped; Gohier was put under arrest; and the other Directors vacated their seats. Thus the government was dissolved, and

Sieyes was left to produce another new constitution from his well-stored *pigeon-holes.*

The scene which followed, on the removal of the councils to Saint Cloud, beggars all description. While the council of Elders were about to deliberate on the novel situation in which they were placed, Buonaparté suddenly appeared in their hall, attended by a military escort; and, anticipating the power[illegible]cant to assume, used to the legislative body the language of a dict[illegible]. After he had directed them how to proceed, he concluded his speech, inaptly enough, by declaring himself, "nothing but the devoted arm of the Republic;" to which a shrewd member added, by way of reminding the military protector of the state of his duty, "and of the constitution." This unfortunate addition threw the irritable Corsican off his guard, and, forgetting that he was speaking to his masters, he, with equal insolence and truth, replied, "the constitution! does it become you to invoke the constitution?—Did you not tread it under foot on the eighteenth of Fructidor, on the twenty-second of Floreal, and the thirtieth of Prairiel?—The constitution! is it any thing more than a pretext, and a cloak for all manner of tyranny? The time for putting a period to these disasters is, at length, come. You have charged me to present you with the means. Had I harboured any personal designs, or views of *usurpation,* I should not have waited till this day in order to realize them. Before I left France I was solicited, and since my return, the solicitation has been renewed, by the heads of different parties, to take possession of the public authority. Barras and Moulin proposed to me to seize the government. I could disclose facts which would confound the greater part of my calumniators. All the rights of the people have been atrociously violated: and always under the pretence of a regard for the constitution. It is left to your wisdom, and to your firmness, to re-establish those sacred rights, and to use means for saving the country." When the relative situation, and the past conduct, of this Corsican upstart are considered, it is impossible to decide whether his impudence or his hypocrisy was most calculated to excite surprize and to rouze indignation. Those very rights of the people of which he now stood forward as the boastful champion, had scarcely, by any individual, been more grossly violated, than by Napoleone Buonaparté himself.

It will be remembered that, in the autumn of 1795, he was the only officer who could be found to head the Conventional troops, when employed for the murderous purpose of opposing the peaceable citizens of Paris, then engaged in the exercise of the most important of their political rights, conferred upon them by the new constitution of that day, the elective franchise. He answered their *claims of right* by the thunder of his cannon; and silenced the voice of patriotism with the sword; and all these murders were committed by him *under the pretext of a regard for the constitution.*" Under the pretext he presided at the murder of the Royalists at Toulon. But, without such pretext, he encouraged every one of the breaches of the constitution, with which he now reproached the councils, which had occurred previous to his embarkation for Egypt, by procuring from his troops a formal sanction, and express approbation, of those proceedings;—and particularly of one of those very revolutionary measures which he now, most hypocritically, stigmatized, the forcible seizure and banishment of two members of the Directory, and of a considerable number of the legislative body. In short, there was not an act, by which freedom was either secretly undermined, or openly attacked, of which he was not either the projector, or in which he did not bear a principal part.

Irritated at the unexpected opposition which he experienced, for this vain man, though he must have known that he had deserved the scaffold, expected every body and every thing, even in his present subordinate situation, to bend to his will, rushed out of the council of Elders, (who had now a full proof of his real views and designs, and who ought, therefore, to have taken him into custody without a moment's delay) and went to harangue the soldiers and the mob. To the first, the hypocrite said—"Turn your bayonets against me whenever you find me an enemy to liberty." After he had thus sounded the disposition of the people without, he returned to the hall of the elders, and again addressed the assembly:—"It is time to speak out, and I have no design which I wish to keep secret. The constitution, too often violated, is utterly inadequate to the salvation of the people. It is indispensably necessary to have recourse to means proper for carrying into execution *the sacred principles of the sovereignty of the people, civil liberty, and freedom of*

speech, as of thought; and, in one word, the realization of ideas which have hitherto been only *chimerical.*"

During this time the Lower House, or council of five hundred, of which Lucien Buonaparté was President, had met in the Orangery. A motion, certainly both rational and constitutional, in the present extraordinary situation of affairs, was made for a select committee, to be formed for the purpose of making a report on the State of the Nation. This motion was seconded, at the same moment, by several members; and a general exclamation, at the same time, prevailed throughout the hall, of—" the constitution! the constitution or death!—No dictatorship! Down with the Dictators. We are not afraid of the bayonets, we are free!" These feelings were certainly such as might be expected from persons in the situation of the members of that council at the time; and were expressed in a suitable manner; but Lucien Buonaparté, immediately applying the expressions to what he knew to be the real circumstances of the case, exclaimed, with an affected air, " I am too sensible of the dignity of my office, any longer to suffer the insolent threats of certain speakers, I call them to order." As this sagacious president did not pretend to specify the particular breach of order of which the members whom he reproved, for language, by the bye, perfectly constitutional, and strictly consonant with the oaths which he, as well as they, had taken, were guilty, the council treated his call with the contempt which it deserved. One of the members, Grandmaison, who represented the department of the Gironde, observed, that it would be as well to enquire what had been done, as what was to be done. To talk of fidelity to the Republic, was, in his mind, at best but equivocal, as it might mean a Republic, such as that of Venice, or of the United States; but the constitution they all understood, and therefore he called upon the council to take a fresh oath of fidelity to the constitution. This manœuvre had been frequently practised before, in the course of the revolution, and generally preceded the destruction of the constitution, an event marked, of course, with an accumulation of perjuries!—Yet, strange to say, this oath was coolly and deliberately taken, by every member, (and the act of administering it took up two hours,) even by those who had entered into the conspiracy, of which Sieyes and Buonaparté were the leaders. While

the council was employed in considering who would be a proper successor to Barras, whose resignation had just been sent in, Buonaparté entered the hall, followed by four grenadiers, while a number of other soldiers, with some general officers, remained at the door.

In the temper of the Council at this moment, it was easy to foresee what the reception of the Corsican would be. An universal uproar immediately ensued, and exclamations were heard on all sides of—"Who is that? Who is that?—Sabres here!—Down with the Dictator!" These indications of discontent were not, as usual, confined to words, for a great portion of the members instantly rushed from their seats, seized the little Corsican by the collar, shook him, and dragged him towards the door. The moment was critical, the culprit's courage forsook him, he trembled for his fate; and a dagger, aimed at his breast, (although, unfortunately for the repose of Europe, it missed its aim) completed his consternation. The blow might, probably, have been repeated, had not Lefebre, most opportunely, rushed into the hall, and rescued the culprit from the rage of the Council. Many of the Members severely reproved the officers and soldiers who thus dared to interrupt their deliberations, and violate the sacred seat of Legislative wisdom. After much noise and altercation, the President, who had viewed this scene with great anxiety and alarm, succeeded, at length, in obtaining a hearing,—when he admitted, that "the commotion which had taken place was natural, and that the feelings of the Council, on what had just passed, were in unison with his own. But, after all, it was equally natural to suppose that the General, in the step he had taken, had no other object in view than to give an account of the state of affairs, or to communicate something or other interesting to the public; at any rate, he did not think that any member of that assembly should harbour any injurious suspicions." This ridiculous observation called forth various remarks from the indignant members of the Council;—one said, "Buonaparté has this day sullied his glory;"—a second exclaimed, "Buonaparté has conducted himself like a King;"—and a third demanded that "Buonaparté be called to the bar to answer for his conduct." Lucien, now sinking the President in the brother, quitted the chair, which was immediately taken by Chazal.

A warm debate ensued, in which Tallot took a distinguished part.—Adverting to the sudden removal of the Councils to Saint Cloud, he observed, that the Elders in adopting so extraordinary and hasty a measure, did not intend that they should carry on their deliberations in a prison, and at the point of bayonets.—"What! the representatives of the French people in a village surrounded by a military force, and that not at their disposal! Not that I am afraid of these soldiers. They have fought for liberty; they are [illegible]tions, our children. But this I declare, that yesterday the Constitution suffered violence. The Council of Elders had no right to appoint a General; Buonaparté had no right to enter our hall without orders; that is the truth;—as for you, you cannot long give your free votes in your present position." He concluded with a motion, that the Council of Elders should be requested to send the Legislative Body back to Paris. This motion was generally approved, though feebly opposed by two or three Members. Lucien Buonaparté requested, that before they adopted such a motion, the General should be called to hear what he had to allege in his own defence. Lucien was now requested to re-assume his office of President, and, as he testified some reluctance to comply with this request, those who had urged it used the decisive argument of a pistol, which they presented to his breast, to compel his acquiescence. The party of grenadiers, who were upon the *Qui vive*, at the door, fearing his life was in danger, pressed forward, rescued him from the imaginary peril, and conveyed him to his brother.

Napoleone had been employed, for some time, in the honourable task of exciting the Directorial guard to mutiny against their masters. He talked loudly of himself, and of the dangers he had just escaped; he, whom the combined Kings of Europe had not been able to reach with their armies, was, at this moment, threatened with outlawry, by factious assassins. The soldiers seemed very well disposed to listen to him, and this disposition was strengthened * by the arrival of his brother Lucien,

* An English writer, describing this event, states, that the mutinous disposition of the soldiers, on this occasion, was "in some measure *legalized* by the presence of the President." Strange ideas of *law*, surely, must such a man have! According to this doctrine, if any popular General were to surround the House of Commons with troops, for the purpose of over-

who, having quitted the Hall, now mounted a horse, and, in his turn, harangued the troops. He told them, with the same assurance, and the same falsehood, which had marked his bro[illegible] address, that a great majority of the Council was, at that moment, under the influence of terror, from a few members armed with poniards, who besieged the Tribune, and threatened their colleagues with death; that these ruffians had put themselves in a state of rebellion against the Council of Elders, and had dared to threaten the [illegible]eral, who [illegible] ordered to carry the decree for transferring the legislative body t[illegible] Cloud into ex[illegible]ion. But it was themselves, he said, who had become outlaws by their furious attempts against the liberty of the Councils. He called upon the soldiers to deliver the majority of the Council from the oppression under which they laboured, in order that they might deliberate peaceably *(at the point of the bayonet)* on the destiny of the Republic.—"General, and you soldiers," said this worthy President of a legislative body, "you will not acknowledge, as legislators of France, any other than such as shall rally around me. Those ruffians are no longer the representatives of the people, but the representatives of the poniard." This precious harangue was calculated to rouse the drooping spirits, and to fix the wavering resolution, of the Corsican, whose presence of mind, and whose courage, which have been so loudly vaunted by his stupid admirers, had nearly forsaken him, and who, but for the advice and assistance of his brother, would have sunk in an attempt, equally beyond his mental resolution and his corporeal fortitude. He instantly ordered the troops to march against the council; and they accordingly entered the hall with fixed bayonets. An officer of cavalry then said,—"Citizen representatives, there is no longer any safety for you in this place; I advise you to withdraw." Instead of complying, the members, as well "the ruffians" as "the majority under the influence of terror," exclaimed, "*Vive la Republique!*" The *military* ruffian, who commanded the grenadiers, then mounted the tribune, and said, very sternly,—"Representatives,

awing their deliberations, and of expelling them, by force, from their seats, and the Speaker should prove as factiously inclined as the troops themselves, and should accordingly join and encourage them, his presence would afford a legal sanction to their rebellious and traitorous proceedings! And this is one of the writers who calls himself *a Whig*, and who professes himself to be the champion of liberty!

withdraw; *it is the order of the General.*" Still the members kept their seats; and one of them began to expostulate with the soldiers on the impropriety of their conduct; when an officer called out, "Grenadiers, forward!" the drums then beat, and the members were literally turned out of the hall, by these armed sovereigns.

To crown this disgraceful scene, the Council of Elders resolved that they now constituted the complete legislative body of the Republic, though, as if to shew the nullity of their own resolutions, they agreed that it would be proper to assemble, in the evening, the few members of the Council of Five Hundred, who still remained at St. Cloud. These accordingly met, with Lucien Buonaparté at their head, and were base enough to pass a formal vote of thanks to the whole tribe of rebel officers and troops, with Napoleone at their head, who had, that morning, violated the legislative sanctuary, and driven the legal representatives of the people from their seats, by brutal force. Lucien then made a long and stupid declamation, in which he descanted vehemently on principles, and sufficiently proved that he had no principle himself. He drew, however, a most gloomy picture of the Republic, and completely falsified every assertion which the admirers of French principles had advanced, respecting the excellence, and the advantages, of a revolutionary government. He shewed it, indeed, to be pregnant with every evil; to be stained with blood and corruption; and to be adequate to no one purpose of social comfort, or of national prosperity. Boulay de la Meurthe, a member of the same faction, did not scruple to declare, that *the revolution which had just taken place* had been for some time concerted. It was intended, however, to be effected only by *moral and constitutional means*,—the same means which had, in fact, been employed in the Council of Elders; in other words, by intrigue, corruption, and intimidation, and not by force. But, he said, the fury and madness of a violent faction in the Council of Five Hundred,—that is, the faction which would neither be corrupted nor intimidated,—which had been their torment for a long time, had obstructed the progress of moral and constitutional influence, in their assembly. This faction had set its face against all free discussion, and, by its tyrannical conduct, had compelled the well-intentioned majority to quit the place of their meeting. The Council of the real

representatives of the people had been dissolved by their violence, and converted into an unconstitutional and seditious mob; and the French legislature and the nation must have experienced all the horrors of a civil war, had it not been *for the firmness and the foresight* of him whom the law had vested with the power of maintaining order in the present great moment. This species of revolutionary logic, which converted the duty of preserving the Directory and the Legislative Bodies from all insult and violence, and for protecting them against every invasion of their rights and independence, for that was the duty, and the sole duty, of the commander of the Directorial guard, into a right to exercise violence against them, to destroy their rights, and to rob them of their power, was such as neither this man nor any other would have dared to employ, unless the assembly had been wholly composed of the same miserable tools of faction as himself. In his long speech, however, he exhibited a pretty correct view of the republican government, to which he ascribed every kind of vice, and no one virtue. After the banishment of the deputies, the whole power, he observed, being concentrated in the hands of the Directory, the Legislative Body was, in a manner, defunct. *Treaties of peace were violated,* and war was every where waged, without the Councils having any participation either in its origin or in its conduct.

It is remarkable that Mr. Boulay de la Meurthe, who here so pathetically lamented this dreadful state of things, was one of those who most contributed to produce it. It is really amusing to trace the progress of these Republican patriots. After that atrocious act of tyranny, which consigned so many of the representatives of the great nation to the inhospitable wilds of Guiana, an act in which Boulay most heartily concurred, he himself made a motion, which was adopted by the Legislative Body, to repeal all the moderate laws which had been enacted during the whole session. On that occasion he pronounced a flaming panegyric on the very Directory whom he now reprobated, loudly celebrated the victory which they had obtained over their enemies, and even proposed to perpetuate the memory of that event by the erection of a monument.* Such is the consistency of republican patriotism!

* See his speech on this occasion in the Moniteur of Sept. 6, 1797. And yet the same

He proceeded to remark, that the government was equally incapable of making either war or peace; that it had no fixed principles whatever; that it was radically vicious and defective; that it afforded to foreign powers no security for the preservation of peace, and to the French themselves no security for domestic happiness. The picture which this republican drew of that "stupendous monument of human happiness, and human intregrity," which had been held up to the admiration of Britain, is too curious and interesting, and too replete with salutary instruction to the reforming innovators of all countries, to be passed over lightly. It was notorious, he said, that personal safety might be easily compromised, and that the greater part of property was in a state of insecurity; that all bargains, commerce, and the useful arts, were in a state of stagnation; that there was no longer any confidence between man and man; that the people were harassed and tormented in every possible way; that their misery was so great, and their oppression so complete, that they dared scarcely complain; and that they who saw the causes of these evils had not courage either to make them known, or to point out the proper remedies. And "this deficiency of civil liberty and domestic happiness" he ascribed to "the imperfections and vices of their social organization." The deduction which the orator drew from these premises, was the necessity of a *new revolution*. Another member then read a plan, which had been previously prepared by the Abbè Sieyes, of the new Consular government. By this plan, sixty-one members of the council were deprived

writer, whose singular notions of *legal* authority were adverted to in a preceding note, does not hesitate to hold up M. Boulay as a man "who had so much signalized his zeal and talents in opposition to tyranny and oppression; and as a man not only of fine parts, but of unblemished character."—Annual Register for 1800, History of Europe. P. 56. In addition to his support of one of the most unjust and tyrannical acts which had been committed even in republican France, and to his memorable eulogy on the Directory, by whom it was planned and executed, Boulay, on the 18th of October, 1797, moved, that all men of noble birth should be excluded from every employment, and that all who had held places in the King's household, or in the household of any member of the Royal Family; or who had borne titles, or been decorated with orders, before the revolution, should be transported! This motion was too outrageously barbarous and unjust even for the legislative tools of that Directory to sanction; and it was accordingly negatived. But still it remains on record as a notable instance of Boulay's "opposition to tyranny and oppression!"

of their seats, for their presumption in opposing the illegal conduct of Buonaparté in the morning; although there did not exist any legal power, in this or any other body, thus to strip the representatives of the people of their lawful authority; and although this punishment of men without trial, and contrary to law, was as great an act of tyranny, and as gross an invasion of the rights of the people, and of the independence of the legislature, as any of those which had been so strongly reprobated in the Directory! The Directory was abolished, and the government was vested in three Consuls, Sieyes, Ducos, and Buonaparté. The two Councils were to retain their powers, and, during the suspension of their sittings, a committee of twenty-five, appointed by each Council, was to exercise their authority, in conjunction with the Consuls, in all matters of police, *legislation*, and finance. To analyze constitutions, and systems of government, which rise up with the rapidity of mushrooms, and fall into decay nearly as soon, were a vain and useless task. The new constitution, surrounded as the Councils were with soldiers, was, of course, accepted unanimously by both Councils; and Lucien Buonaparté hailed the happy event as the *regeneration of liberty*. It must be confessed, that this new birth of French freedom, which took place on the 10th of November, 1799, was ushered in under most extraordinary auspices; the sword and the bayonet were the unpromising sponsors, though the prospects which *they* held out proved any thing but delusive. The new government was immediately installed, and entered, without delay, on the execution of their office. Buonaparté issued a proclamation, in which he called himself the Soldier of Liberty, although it was perfectly clear that he had just destroyed every vestige of freedom. The Councils returned to Paris; their committees were chosen; and the following oath was framed for all public functionaries: "I swear fidelity to the French Republic, one and indivisible; and to maintain with all my power the *rights of the sovereignty of the people, a representative government, liberty, equality,* and the security of persons and property."

There is no one feature in the conduct of the French factions, which have incessantly harassed their distracted country, from the very dawn of the Revolution to the present moment, more calculated to excite

both concern and disgust, in a contemplative and sober mind, than the multiplication of oaths, apparently taken for no other purpose than that of displaying the contempt of the Jacobins for all religious obligations, and of shewing how lightly they considered the deadly guilt of perjury. The members of the Council of Five Hundred took, in the morning, an oath to preserve inviolate that constitution which they suffered to be destroyed in the evening. What a contrast does the conduct of this degenerate people exhibit with that of the ancient Romans, for whom they have affected such unbounded admiration! With the Romans, an oath was ever deemed sacred. In the memorable instance, when the Consul Quintius Cincinnatus, who attempted to raise an army in Rome for the attack of two neighbouring states, was opposed by the tribunes, he called upon such of the people to follow him to the field, as had taken the oath to the Consuls of the preceding year; and the people, notwithstanding the representations of their tribunes, who observed, that as Cincinnatus was a private citizen when that oath was administered, it could not bind them to obey him, rejected with disdain the sophistical distinction, and, true to their oaths, immediately flew to arms. The French, however, had been taught, by their impious leaders, throughout the revolution, to treat with contempt all ties but such as interest should induce them to respect.

The present oath, too, came with a bad grace from men who had just violated, in the most essential parts, the very rights which they now swore to maintain. In effecting a complete revolution in the government, in arbitrarily and illegally expelling sixty-three members from their seats, in abolishing the Directory, and in appointing a Consulate, they had trampled the rights and the sovereignty of the people under foot; and did not even think it necessary to take their opinion on the question.

Though Boulay de la Meurthe had sanctioned all the unconstitutional and violent measures of the Directorial government, he had for some time adopted the notions of Sieyes respecting the necessity of a change. Early in 1799, he had published a pamphlet, in which he investigated the causes which had prevented the establishment of a Republic in

England, after the murder of Charles the First; and these causes he represented to be precisely the same with those which had produced the successive destruction of every French constitution, which had been adopted in France since the year 1789; thence predicting, as it were, the near and inevitable subversion of the French Republic.

Lucien Buonaparté, to whom the present change may be principally ascribed, had, in the preceding year, (October 9th, 1798) when the agents of the Directory were employed in bringing about the new revolution in the Cisalpine Republic, broached an opinion which opened a door to perpetual changes, either at home or abroad, whenever the interest, or ambition, of France might require them. On that occasion he observed, "The French constitution was *given* to the Cisalpine Republic. Treaties of alliance had been formed between the two governments; by the existence, therefore, of these solemn compacts, the *two* governments were *equally* independent." So far the principle which he laid down was indisputably just, and such as would afford no sanction to the comment which has been made on it. But, as if fearful of having advanced a rule which might supply a powerful argument against the invariable conduct of the French government, he hastened to provide an exception of so general and sweeping a nature, as wholly to destroy the efficacy of the rule.—"An occasion might doubtless occur," he continued, "when the safety of France might require precautions to be taken in Italy, and when a state of war would demand reforms and *changes;* then it would be excusable in France TO MAKE," (though both were equally independent) "the Cisalpine Republic SUBMIT to a temporary DEPRIVATION of her INDEPENDENCE. In such a case France might JUSTLY TAKE BACK *what she has* GIVEN." By this accommodating conscience, and this ingenious kind of sophistry, there was no act of tyranny, no perjury, which might not be sanctioned and justified.

The new *committees* now proceeded to regulate the financial concerns of the Republic, and to raise the supplies for the ensuing year. Berthier, the constant adviser, and military preceptor, of Buonaparté, was made war-minister, and to him was entrusted the sum of about

one million and a half sterling, for the current expences of his department, without any specification of the particular services to which it might be applied. By the fiat of the Consuls, who had sworn to maintain liberty, sentence of banishment was pronounced on fifty-nine members of the opposition, of whom thirty-seven were to be sent to Cayenne, and the rest to the Isle of Oleron. But whether they were afraid to carry this sentence into execution in the present state of the public mind, or whether they wished to acquire a character for mercy, which was an alien to their hearts, the sentence was afterwards repealed. Several popular measures of internal police, and economical regulation, were adopted to conciliate, if possible, the public esteem; some unjust laws were revoked, some acts of severity cancelled, and some marks of indulgence shewn to certain unhappy emigrants who had been shipwrecked on the coast, imprisoned, and, by an apt specimen of revolutionary logic, made to fall within the meaning of a law which rendered those who *returned* to France, after emigration, guilty of a capital offence.

After these preliminary measures, the three Consuls laboured to give the finishing stroke, the last polish, to the new political production of the prolific brain of the Abbè Sieyes. It was produced to the world on the 15th of December, in a proclamation addressed, by the councils, to the people of France. The government was now to be vested in a chief Consul, Buonaparté himself, assisted by two subordinate Consuls, Cambaceres and Le Brun, with a conservative senate, and a mixed legislative body, composed of tribunes and senators; the former to talk but not to vote; and the latter to vote, but not to talk. In this new system, the executive power was every thing, and the legislative power nothing. The wary Sieyes, the father of this notable scheme of government, passed from the consulship to the conservative senate, and had the estate of Crosne assigned him for his services. Ducos, also, sunk into a senator. Buonaparté, now in possession of kingly power, established his residence at the palace of the Thuilleries, in the very apartments formerly occupied by the family of his murdered sovereign.

Such was the state of Europe at the close of 1799. Mr. Pitt had experienced the mortification of seeing his whole system of foreign

policy frustrated, by persons whom he could not command, and by events which he could not controul. Had the Austrian cabinet been true to the principles of the grand confederacy, faithful to her alliance, and intent on the accomplishment of its great object; and had the British government undertaken the expedition to Holland at an earlier part of the campaign, (when Massena was pressed by the Archduke in Switzerland, and Joubert and Moreau by Suworrow in Italy,) and appropriated a larger force to the enterprize, the wings of Republican France might have been clipped; she might have been stripped of her conquests; her vassals might have been restored to freedom and independence; and one other struggle might have emancipated Europe from the degrading shackles of Gallic tyranny.

Still, discouraging as the failure of a plan so admirably combined unquestionably must have been, the relative state of the belligerent powers was much more favourable to the allies than it had been at the opening of the campaign, and, therefore, Mr. Pitt was sensible that the interest of this country, in common with the interests of all Europe, required the exertion of every effort that could be made, with the least hope of success, for humbling the pride, and repressing the power, of the general enemy. In order, then, to increase our military force, and to provide the necessary supplies, Parliament was called together so early as the twenty-fourth of September. The reason assigned for this extraordinary convocation of the great councils of the nation, at such an unusual period, was the necessity that existed, under the present circumstances of Europe, to increase our regular army. A bill was accordingly brought forward, by the Ministers, for enabling three-fifths of the militia to enter into the line, if they should think proper so to do. By a former law this power was granted only to one-fourth of the militia. This had been found the most effectual measure of speedily recruiting the army, of any that could be adopted; and it was therefore not surprising, that, on such an emergency, the servants of the crown should have recourse to it. It was opposed, however, as well on general principles, from its alleged tendency to diminish the constitutional force of the country, (as the militia was called, in contradistinction to the regulars, though most irregularly, as every force, established

by an act of the legislature, is equally constitutional, and any force that has not the sanction of Parliament, is unconstitutional) and from motives of a more personal nature, by the commanders of militia regiments, who complained, and not without reason, of the extreme hardships of having their men taken from them as soon as they had fitted them for service; by which, indeed, the colonel of a militia regiment was reduced almost to the situation of a recruiting serjeant. To these objections, however, we opposed the paramount principle, by which all private considerations are made to yield to the public good. And, against the first of them it was urged, that it was founded on a fallacy, as it was intended to fill up any vacancies that might be thus occasioned in the militia, by an early ballot. After this bill had been passed into a law, and the necessary supplies granted for the public service, for the first months of the ensuing year, the Parliament was prorogued for the holidays.

Meantime, Buonaparté, finding himself, to his great astonishment, quietly placed in possession of supreme power, and of the palace of the Bourbons, deemed it expedient to assume a kingly tone; and, therefore, on Christmas day, he addressed a letter direct to the Sovereign of these realms, to announce to his Majesty the happy event which had taken place in France. "Called by the wishes of the French nation," said the Corsican, with his usual contempt of truth, "to occupy the first magistracy of the Republic, I think it proper, on entering into office, to make a direct communication of it to your Majesty. Must the war, which has, for eight years, ravaged the four quarters of the globe, be eternal? Are there no means of coming to an understanding? How can the two most enlightened nations of Europe, powerful and strong beyond what their inclination requires, sacrifice to ideas of vain grandeur the advantages of commerce, internal prosperity, and the happiness of individuals? How is it that they do not feel that peace is an object of the first necessity, as it is one of the greatest glory? These sentiments cannot be foreign from the heart of your Majesty, who reigns over a free nation, and with the sole view of promoting its happiness.

"Your Majesty will only see in this overture, my sincere desire to

contribute efficaciously, for a second time, to a general pacification, by a step speedy, entirely confidential, and disengaged from those forms which, necessary, perhaps, to disguise the dependence of weak states, prove, in those which are strong, only the mutual desire of deceiving one another. France and England, by the abuse of their strength, may still, for a long time, for the misfortune of all nations, postpone the period of their exhaustion; but I will venture to assert, that the fate of all civilized nations depends on the termination of a war which involves the whole world."

This letter was transmitted by a special messenger, and inclosed in a note from Talleyrand, now minister for foreign affairs, to Lord Grenville. It is more than probable, that it was written at the suggestion of Talleyrand himself, who had passed some time in England, at the close of 1782, when he was in habits of intercourse with the leading members of Opposition; and who had, of course, a competent knowledge of the political tactics of party in this country. He possibly thought, that if it produced no other effect favourable to France, the letter would supply a theme on which the orators of the party might expatiate with advantage, when the measure should be submitted to Parliament. It squared, too, very much with the present views of the Corsican, who had sought to conciliate the people of France by a profession of moderate principles, in direct contradiction to the whole tenor of his public life; and by the display of a pacific disposition, which his conduct, during the whole of the revolution, belied.

Had he really been sincere in his avowed desire to stop the effusion of blood, which French ambition and French rapacity had alone caused to flow in torrents, he would not have contented himself with vague and loose expressions; he would not have pursued the Machiavelian policy which the Republic had invariably observed; he would not have addressed his overtures, such as they were, to the belligerent powers separately, but to the members of the armed confederacy, in the aggregate. By such an attempt as the present he clearly demonstrated his object to be the dissemination of discord and mistrust between the allies. If the substance of these extraordinary overtures, which must be consi-

dered as phenomena in the diplomatic world, be analyzed, it will be found to consist of two simple questions, "whether the war which had, for eight years, ravaged the four quarters of the globe, was to be eternal?" and "whether there was no means of coming to a good understanding?" The only answer, then, which the note required, was—to the first question, no; to the second, yes. But it is farther remarkable, that, at the time when it was written, Buonaparté did not even know whether the people, over whom he had established himself supreme dictator, would accept the constitution which he offered them. The bayonet which had secured his power, indeed, should, he was resolved, maintain it. But as that bayonet had been employed so frequently to demolish its own work, it might be used for the same purpose again, and the next dictator might overturn the fabric which the present had erected, and abrogate the treaties which his predecessor might conclude. There was one mark of his adherence to revolutionary principles displayed in this note; in the studied contempt of those forms which civilized Europe had, for centuries, deemed it necessary to observe and respect, but which the Corsican now represented as nothing more than the instruments of deception in the hands of powerful states. Had he entertained a wish to inspire confidence, had he been anxious to afford a proof of his sincerity, he might, without the aid of those forms which, by an affectation of superiority, so truly ridiculous in such a personage, he treated with such sovereign contempt, have declared his readiness to renounce all views of conquest and aggrandizement, to forego all design of revolutionizing Europe, to repeal those *still unrepealed* decrees which were the immediate cause of the war with England, and, ultimately, to conclude a peace with the *allies*, on the footing of the *status quo ante bellum*. He knew that these were terms (given with a considerable modification of the last, in favour of France) on which the British Minister had long since avowed his readiness to treat; though, even in that case, it would have been necessary to enquire what better security he could offer for his observance of a treaty founded on this basis, than his predecessors in the exercise of supreme power could give, who, according to the confessions of his own ministers, broke all the treaties which they made.

It was worthy of consideration, whether there was any thing in the personal character of the individual, which could tend to inspire the necessary confidence in his engagements. "Society," it has been observed, "is built upon trust, and trust upon confidence in one another's integrity."* It follows, then, that the integrity of an individual is the standard by which we are to decide how far a man is deserving of confidence. Now, there was scarcely one crime in the black catalogue of human depravity, which this man had not committed in the course of his revolutionary career. Whether contemplated at an early period of his public life, accepting the discarded mistress of his patron as the condition of his promotion; or, at the head of a victorious army, dealing death and desolation around, watering the tree of liberty with the blood of *emancipated slaves*; not content with the devastation of war, and the slaughter of battle; reducing defenceless villages to ashes, and murdering their innocent and unprotected inhabitants; carrying plunder and rapine in his train, gratifying his avarice by unheard-of extortions, satiating his cruelty by unexampled oppressions, and aggravating the horrors of war by the SALE OF HIS PRISONERS;† combining the malignity of a fiend with the despotism of a tyrant, in constantly adding insult to injury; offering freedom, but imposing slavery; promising happiness, but diffusing misery; professing a respect for the Catholic religion, but persecuting its ministers, and deposing its chief; profaning the altars of God, and trampling on the independence of man; viewed, at either of these periods, or under any of these circumstances, his conduct, far from inspiring confidence, could excite only sentiments of detestation and disgust. But, if he had been followed still farther, to the unoffending shores of Egypt, and beheld coolly directing the wanton and useless assassination of the wretched inhabitants of Alexandria, men, women, and children, for four successive hours; murdering his Turkish captives, and consigning his own sick troops to an untimely grave; and then, crowning all his enormities, by an open

* Dr. South.

† Many of the Austrians taken during the campaign of 1796, in Italy, were sold to the Spaniards, to work in their mines in South America.

renunciation of the blessed Saviour of the World, horror must have subdued every other feeling, and the impious monster have been left to the just vengeance of an offended God. Such was the real character of the man who called upon the British Sovereign to repose confidence in his assertions; and, as an additional inducement to confide in him, he might have referred his Majesty to the sentiments avowed in his letter to Kleber, on his flight from Egypt,—that letter, in which he desired his successor to console the Porte, by protesting, as he himself had done, that the French never meant to retain Egypt for themselves, in the very same breath in which he expatiated on its vast importance to France. Or he might have referred to the advice of Poussielgue, which he had evidently adopted,—"*at all events it is necessary to open negotiations with the English and the Porte, if it were only to gain time, and give umbrage to Russia.*"

The Ministry took some time to consider what would be the proper answer to give to an application at once so unexpected and so unprecedented, both in form and substance; and, at length, on the fourth of January, a letter was sent, by Lord Grenville, to Talleyrand, containing an official note, in which it was observed, that the King had given frequent proofs of his sincere desire for the re-establishment of secure and permanent tranquillity in Europe. He never was, nor had been, engaged in any contest for a vain and false glory. He had no other view than that of maintaining, against all aggression, the rights and happiness of his subjects. For these he had contended against an unprovoked attack; and, for the same objects, he was still obliged to contend; nor could he hope that this necessity would be removed by entering, at the present moment, into negotiation with those whom a fresh revolution had so recently placed in the exercise of power in France; since no real advantage could arise from such negotiation to the great and desirable object of general peace, until it should distinctly appear, that those causes had ceased to operate which originally produced the war, and by which it had been since protracted, and, in more than one instance, renewed. The same system, to the prevalence of which France justly ascribed all her present miseries, was that which had also involved the rest of Europe in a long and destructive warfare, of a nature long since

unknown to the practice of civilized nations. For the extension of this system, and for the extermination of all established governments, the resources of France had, from year to year, and in the midst of the most unparalleled distress, been lavished and exhausted. To that indiscriminate spirit of destruction, the Netherlands, the United Provinces, the Swiss Cantons, (his Majesty's ancient friends and allies) had successively been sacrificed. Germany had been ravaged; Italy, though then rescued from its invaders, had been made the scene of unbounded rapine and anarchy. His Majesty had himself been compelled to maintain an arduous and burthensome contest for the independence and existence of his kingdoms. Nor had these calamities been confined to Europe alone; they had been extended to the most distant quarters of the world, and even to countries so remote, both in situation and interest, from the present contest, that the very existence of such a war was perhaps unknown to those who found themselves suddenly involved in all its horrors. While such a system continued to prevail, and while the blood and treasure of a numerous and powerful nation could be lavished in its support, experience had shewn that no defence, but that of open and steady hostility, could be availing. The most solemn treaties had only paved the way for fresh aggression; and it was to a determined resistance alone that was now due whatever remained in Europe of stability for property, for personal liberty, for social order, or for the free exercise of religion.

For the security, therefore, of these essential objects, his Majesty could not place his reliance on the mere renewal of general professions of pacific disposition. Such professions had repeatedly been held out by all those who had successively directed the resources of France to the destruction of Europe; and whom the present rulers had declared to have been all, from the beginning, and uniformly, incapable of maintaining the relations of amity and peace. Greatly, indeed, would his Majesty rejoice, whenever it should appear that the dangers to which his own dominions, and those of his allies, had been so long exposed, had really ceased; whenever he should be satisfied, that the necessity of resistance was at an end; that, after the experience of so many years of crimes and miseries, better principles had ultimately prevailed in France;

and that all the gigantic projects of ambition, and all the restless schemes of destruction, which had endangered the very existence of civil society, had, at length, been finally relinquished;—but the conviction of such a change, however agreeable to his Majesty's wishes, could result only from experience, and from the evidence of facts.

The best and most natural pledge of its stability and permanence would be the restoration of that line of princes, which, for so many centuries, maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and in consideration and respect abroad; such an event would at once have removed, and would, at any time, remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace. It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory; and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security which they were now compelled to seek by other means. His Majesty made no claim to prescribe to France what should be the form of her government, or in whose hands she should vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation. His Majesty looked only to the security of his own dominions, and those of his allies, and to the general safety of Europe. Whenever he should judge that such security could, in any manner, be obtained, as resulting either from the internal situation of that country from whose internal situation the danger had arisen, or from such other circumstances, of whatever nature, as might produce the same end, his Majesty would eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his allies the means of immediate and general pacification. Unhappily, no such security yet existed; no sufficient evidence of the principles by which the new government would be directed; no reasonable ground by which to judge of its stability. In that situation it could, for the present, only remain for his Majesty to pursue, in conjunction with other powers, those exertions of just and defensive war, which his regard to the happiness of his subjects would never permit him either to continue beyond the necessity in which they originated, or to terminate on any other grounds than such as might best contribute to the secure enjoyment of their tranquillity, their constitution, and their independence.

Such were the grounds on which the British Minister now rested his conduct in resisting an application so unprecedented in its nature, and so vague and undefined in its object, or rather, in the means of accomplishing it. There certainly existed no reason for believing that Buonaparté had renounced the principles of his predecessors, or that he would more scrupulously observe any treaty which he might conclude. The presumption, indeed, was entirely against any such conclusion. Buonaparté, in fact, soon convinced the world, that he was ready to justify the conduct of the first revolutionists, whenever it was called in question, however he might affect to condemn it, when his own interest seemed to require it. In the reply to this answer of the British Cabinet, dated January 14th, he renewed the oft-confuted assertion, that France was not the aggressor in the war; that, so far from having provoked it, she had, from the commencement of her revolution, solemnly proclaimed her love of peace, and her disinclination to conquests, her respect for the independence of all governments: and it was not to be doubted that, occupied entirely at that time with her own internal affairs, she would have avoided taking part in those of Europe, and would have remained faithful to her declarations. But, from an opposite disposition, as soon as the French revolution had broken out, almost all Europe entered into a league for its destruction. The aggression was real long time before it was public; internal resistance was excited; its opponents were favourably received, their extravagant declamations were supported; the French nation was insulted in the persons of its agents; and England set particularly this example by the dismissal of the Minister accredited to her. Finally, France was, in fact, attacked in her independence, in her honour, and in her safety, *long time before the war was declared.*

That Mr. Talleyrand should have subscribed his name to an assertion so monstrously false is really astonishing. The war was declared against England and Holland, by France, on the first of February, 1793, and, at the very end of the preceding year, this very man, Talleyrand himself, had informed his government, that England was only intent on preserving a rigid neutrality. He knew, therefore, that he uttered a falsehood, at the moment when he penned the above sentence in his official note.

But the note proceeded, in the same strain, and with the same confidence, to assert, that it was to the projects of subjection, dissolution, and dismemberment, which were prepared against her, and the execution of which was several times attempted and pursued, that France had a right to impute the evils which she had suffered herself, as well as those which had afflicted Europe. Such projects, for a long time without example, with respect to so powerful a nation, could not fail to bring on the most fatal consequences. Assailed on all sides, the Republic could not but extend universally the efforts of her defence; and *it was only for the maintenance of her own independence that she had made use of those means which she possessed, in her own strength, and in the courage of her citizens.*

The renewal of such assertions, six years after the commencement of the war, and after Brissot on the one hand, and Robespierre on the other, had amply confuted them, each having ascribed the war to the other, and neither to any of the combined powers, putting the strong evidence of facts entirely out of the question, was a certain proof that the same aggressive disposition, the same encroaching and ambitious spirit, the same duplicity, and the same principles, which had marked each successive demagogue who had usurped the reins of government in France, pervaded the mind of the New Consul, and were likely to be the guide of his policy. After the accumulated proofs which, in the former volumes of this history, have been adduced, on the question of aggression, it would be an unwarrantable trespass on the patience of the reader, again formally to confute the string of falsehoods so confidently advanced in the French reply to Lord Grenville's answer. But it must be observed, that Talleyrand studiously avoided all reference to the conditions on which France would be disposed to treat; all answer to Lord Grenville's arguments, on the insecurity of a treaty in the present situation of France;—and, while he offered passports for a plenipotentiary to repair to Dunkirk or elsewhere, he still persisted in excluding the allies of Great Britain, and in confining the proposed negotiation to England and France.

In the answer, which Lord Grenville forwarded on the twentieth of

January, the King expressed his concern in observing, that the unprovoked aggressions of France, *the sole cause and origin of the war*, were systematically defended by her present rulers, under the same injurious pretences by which they were originally attempted to be disguised. His Majesty refused to enter into the refutation of allegations then universally exploded, and, in so far as they respected his Majesty's conduct, not only in themselves utterly groundless, but contradicted, both by the internal evidence of the transactions to which they related, and also by the express testimony (given at the time) of the government of France itself. The French Minister was referred to the first note of the British government for his Majesty's opinion of the present overtures.

The day after this final answer was written, (January the 21st,) Parliament assembled, and the foregoing papers were submitted to both Houses, and occasioned some very long debates. The principles on which the Cabinet had acted were defended in the House of Peers, by Lord Grenville, with whose department the business was more immediately connected; and in the Lower House by Mr. Pitt. The debate in the Lords took place on the 28th of January, when the arguments of Ministers were resisted, chiefly, by the Duke of Bedford and Lord Holland. The Duke imputed the attack which Lord Grenville had made on the character of Buonaparté to *littleness of mind*, and, therefore, thought no terms sufficiently strong to censure it. He did not see any use in descanting upon that character, although, as the confidence necessary to be reposed in him for the fulfilment of any treaty which the King might conclude must rest, materially, on the ground of his personal qualities and dispositions; it appeared most natural to inquire, in what manner these had influenced his public conduct, particularly in respect of other treaties which had been formed between the French Republic and the different powers of the Continent. His Grace, overlooking entirely the intolerable slavery under which all the powers subjugated by France, and even France herself, had long laboured, from the poisonous influence of her revolutionary principles, could see nothing but the people, in *this* country, "bending under the accumulated weight of taxes." The continuance of the *oppression* which, he said, they endured, would either make them torpid slaves, or prepare them for revolution. If the people were driven

to despair, by griping tax-gatherers, *like the French*, they would look up to themselves, and *redress their own grievances.*" It is perfectly clear, that the *tendency* of the language, contained in many parts of this speech, was to excite an insurrection in the country, by telling the people, that they were subjected to oppression, from which nothing but their own interposition, in opposition to the Executive and Legislative authorities, or else a revolution, which, indeed, would have been the natural fruit of such interposition, could possibly relieve them. The vast property which the Duke of Bedford possessed in the country would naturally enough exempt him from any suspicion of harbouring a wish to produce such an effect; but the admission of this apology would only change the object of censure, by complimenting his integrity at the expence of his understanding. His Grace moved an Address, the object of which was to compel Ministers to open a negotiation with France. He was answered by the Earls of Carlisle, Liverpool, and Caernarvon, and by the Lords Romney and Borringdon; and his arguments, or rather assertions, made so little impression on the House, that the motion for the original Address, made by Lord Grenville, was carried with only *six* dissentient voices.

The subject was discussed, in the House of Commons, on the third of February, when Mr. Dundas opened the debate and took a masterly view of the question. His main arguments were directed to an illustration of the important fact—that "the leading feature of the French Revolution was a total disregard of all treaties and obligations, and a sovereign contempt for the rights and privileges of other powers." He shewed that, by a rigid adherence to the original inherent principles of the revolution, every attempt at negotiation had been rendered abortive. And he contended that, even if a treaty of peace had been concluded at Lille, the renewal of war must have taken place before the present moment, as that treaty would not have prevented the French government from adopting that aggressive conduct, and from pursuing those schemes of ambition, which had, in so many instances, been recently manifested by them. Mr. Whitbread followed much the same line of argument as had been observed by the Duke of Bedford; and, as if resolved to suffer no opportunity to escape him of varnishing over the crimes of Buonaparté,

or of finding some justification for them, he insisted, that the Corsican was *as good* as the Sovereigns of Europe;—"if he has broken treaties, so have they;—if he has killed his ten thousands, Suworrow also has killed his ten thousands!!!" By the same curious logic, the most atrocious acts might be justified, and the vilest criminals be brought in comparison with the most upright men; Carrier might be compared with a British judge; the Poissardes of Paris with the followers of Monk; and the murderer at Jaffa with the hero of the Boyne! Mr. Whitbread ridiculed the idea of endeavouring to restore a banished King to his throne, or a Pope to his tiara.

Some of the misrepresentations of Mr. Whitbread, who, in his zeal for the defence of his favourite Corsican, had imputed breaches of faith to the government of his own country, in their conduct to Tuscany and Genoa, were corrected by Mr. Canning, who shewed that nothing had been done to those States but what was fully warranted by the law of nations. He was followed by Mr. Erskine, who strongly censured the conduct of Ministers in rejecting the overtures of Buonaparté, and represented the prospect which a continuance of the war held out as hopeless and desperate.

Mr. Pitt deemed it expedient, on such an occasion, when the mere fact of making overtures, he knew, would, with persons who looked but superficially at the subject, give to the enemy an apparent advantage, which, of course, the Opposition had laboured to improve, to enter into a full investigation of the subject, and to suffer no fact to escape without its due application, and no allegation to pass without an appropriate answer. He began by observing, that Mr. Erskine seemed to have assumed, as the foundation of his reasoning, and as the great argument for an immediate peace, that every effort to overturn the system of the French revolution must be unavailing; and that it would be not only imprudent, but almost impious, to struggle longer against that order of things which, by he knew not what principle of predestination, Mr. Erskine appeared to consider as immortal. Little as he was inclined to accede to this opinion, he was not sorry that the subject had been contemplated in that serious point of view. He did, indeed, consider the

French revolution as the severest trial which the visitation of Providence had ever yet inflicted upon the nations of the earth; but he could not help reflecting, with satisfaction, that this country, even under such a trial, had not only been exempted from those calamities which had covered almost every other part of Europe, but appeared to have been reserved as a refuge and an asylum to those who fled from its persecution, as a barrier to oppose its progress, and, perhaps, ultimately, as an instrument to deliver the world from the crimes and miseries which had attended it.

Under this impression it was that he proposed to take a large and comprehensive view of the question; in doing which he agreed with Mr. Dundas, that it would, in every case, be impossible to separate the present discussion from the former crimes and atrocities of the French revolution; because both the papers then on the table, and the whole of Mr. Erskine's arguments, forced upon their consideration the origin of the war, and all the material facts which had occurred during its continuance. Mr. Erskine had revived and retailed all those arguments from his own pamphlet, which had before passed through thirty-seven or thirty-eight editions in print; and now gave them to the House embellished by the graces of his personal delivery. The First Consul had also thought fit to revive and retail all the chief arguments used by all the opposition speakers, and all the opposition writers, in this country, during the last seven years.—And (what was still more material) the question itself, which was now immediately at issue,—the question whether, under the present circumstances, there was such a prospect of security from any treaty with France as ought to induce them to negotiate, could not be properly decided upon, without retracing, both from their own experience, and from that of other nations, the nature, the causes, and the magnitude, of the danger against which they had to guard, in order to judge of the security which they ought to accept.

Before any man could concur in opinion with Mr. Erskine,—before any man could think that the substance of his Majesty's answer was any other than such as the safety of the country required,—before any man could be of opinion, that to overtures made by the enemy, at such a

time, and under such circumstances, it would have been safe to return an answer concurring in the negotiation,—he must come within one of the three following descriptions: He must either believe that the French revolution neither did then exhibit, nor had at any time exhibited, such circumstances of danger, arising out of the very nature of the system, and of the internal state and condition of France, as to leave to foreign powers no adequate ground of security in negotiation; or, secondly, he must be of opinion, that the change which had recently taken place had given that security which, in the former stages of the revolution, was wanting; or, thirdly, he must be one who, believing that the danger existed, not undervaluing its extent, nor mistaking its nature, nevertheless thought, from his view of the present pressure on the country, from his view of its situation and its prospects, compared with the situation and prospects of its enemies, that we were, with our eyes open, bound to accept of inadequate security for every thing that was valuable and sacred, rather than endure the pressure, or incur the risk, which would result from a farther prolongation of the contest.

In discussing the last of these questions, the House would be led to consider, what inference was to be drawn from the circumstances and the result of our own negotiations, in former periods of the war; whether, in the comparative state of the two countries, the same reason would be found to exist for repeating our then unsuccessful experiments; or whether we had not thence derived the lessons of experience, added to the deductions of reason, marking the inefficacy and danger of the very measures which had been quoted as precedents for adoption at the present moment.

Unwilling as Mr. Pitt professed himself to be to go into such detail, on ground which had been so often trodden before, yet, when he found Mr. Erskine, after all the information which he must have received, if he had read any of the answers to his work, (however ignorant he might be when he wrote it) still giving the sanction of his authority to the supposition that the order to Mr. Chauvelin to depart from this kingdom was the cause of the war between this country and France, he did feel it necessary to make a few observations on that part of the subject.

Here Mr. Pitt, by a plain statement of facts, relative to the origin and cause of the war, overthrew the whole flimsy fabric which Mr. Erskine had erected for himself. It is needless to follow him through this statement, as, in a preceding volume, the subject has been most amply discussed, and all the arguments and assertions of the French and their advocates proved, by authentic documents, to be destitute of foundation. Three facts only, it may be useful to repeat, relating to the ridiculous affirmation, that the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin was the real cause of the war between this country and France. First, that Chauvelin had given in a peremptory ultimatum, by declaring that, if the explanations of the Directory were not received as sufficient, and if Great Britain did not immediately disarm, her refusal would be considered as a declaration of war. Secondly, that, even after the departure of Chauvelin from the country, the door was open to future explanation, which was not only not discouraged, but even solicited, by Mr. Pitt. And, thirdly, the Executive Council of France had actually issued orders for the recal of Chauvelin before they could possibly know that he was sent out of this country, under the provisions of the Alien act.

For the further exposure of the pretext, that the refusal to receive an Ambassador from the Regicide Republic, in its infancy, was a good ground for war, on the part of the French, the Opposition were reminded of the conduct of those neutral powers whose moderation and wise policy had been so often the subject of their admiration, and the theme of their praise. Denmark, for instance, who had preserved a constant friendship with France, had not, for years, admitted an Ambassador from the Republic. In December, 1793, Count Bernstorff, the Danish Minister, officially declared, that "it was well known, that the National Convention had appointed Mr. Grouvelle Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Denmark, but that it was also well known, that he had neither been received nor acknowledged in that quality." And it was not till February, 1796, that Grouvelle was acknowledged by the Danish Cabinet, and the reason assigned by the same Minister for this change of conduct, was this—"So long as no other than a revolutionary government existed in France, his Majesty could not acknowledge the Minister of that government, but now that the French Constitution is completely organized,

and a regular government established in France, his Majesty's obligation ceases in that respect, and Mr. Grouvelle will therefore be acknowledged in the usual form." It would have puzzled his Danish Majesty to point out that difference between the revolutionary government of 1793, and the revolutionary government of 1796, which he urged as a reason for the change in his own conduct; but the fact was introduced by Mr. Pitt, for the sole purpose of shewing, that the principle acted upon by this country had been uniformly adopted by other States, and even by those powers who had never been at war with France.

Mr. Pitt then considered the nature of the ultimatum delivered in by Chauvelin, and proved it to be such as no country, having a due sense of national honour, a just regard for national security, and adequate means for resisting aggression, could have admitted. In the course of this investigation, which, of necessity, contained a repetition of facts and of arguments, which had been used before, on the same subject, he demonstrated the variance between the professions and the conduct of the Regicidal rulers of Republican France. He shewed that, while they incessantly pursued those schemes of conquest which they had solemnly renounced, notwithstanding their formal denial of the construction put by the British Ministers upon their decrees of the 19th of November and 15th of December, 1792, for exciting revolutions in foreign countries, they had invariably acted upon it, and had immediately, and specifically, applied those decrees to England. As the Opposition had not been ashamed to adopt the miserable subterfuges, contained in Talleyrand's jesuitical note, for the patriotic purpose of fixing the charge of aggression, by acts committed previous to the dismission of Chauvelin, upon their own country, Mr. Pitt found it necessary to prove, by the admission of the French themselves, both Robespierreans and Brissotins, by Talleyrand and by Chauvelin, the falsehood of the statement. And, independently of such incontrovertible testimony, on a point of this nature, Mr. Pitt asserted, distinctly and positively, and produced documents in support of his assertion, that, so far from being a party in any plans hostile to France, previous to the end of 1792, the British Cabinet had wholly declined all communications with foreign powers on the subject of such projects, and had adopted a resolution, to which they pertina-

ciously adhered, not to interfere, in any manner, with the internal affairs of France. Nor was any step whatever taken to enter into any concert against France, till after the offensive decree of the 19th of November, 1792.

Even then the Ministers had gone no further than to propose the adoption of a line of conduct which should have for its object the prevention of hostilities;—by calling upon France, in an amicable manner, to withdraw her troops within her own limits, to rescind all acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nations; and to give, in some public and unequivocal manner, a pledge of her intention no longer to foment troubles, or to excite disturbances, against other governments. On these conditions, which were purely and strictly of a *defensive* and *preservative* nature, Mr. Pitt having, thus satisfactorily, explained the principles and views of the government, at the close of 1792, and made suitable comments on its moderation, forbearance, and sincerity, observed, that he did not mean to challenge the applause and approbation of his country, because he must now confess that the Ministers had been too slow in anticipating that danger of which they had, perhaps, even then, sufficient experience; though far short, indeed, of that which they now possessed; and that they might even then have seen, what facts had since but too incontestibly proved, that nothing but vigorous and open hostility could afford complete and adequate security against revolutionary principles, while they retained a proportion of power sufficient to furnish the means of war.

Mr. Pitt summed up that head of his argument which related to the origin of the war, by stating that he had detailed to the House a system which was in itself a declaration of war against all nations, which was so intended, and which had been so applied; which had been exemplified in the extreme peril and hazard of almost all who, for a moment, had trusted to treaty, and which had not, at that hour, overwhelmed Europe in one indiscriminate mass of ruin, only because England had not indulged, to a fatal extremity, that disposition, which she had, however, indulged too far; because she had not consented to trust to profession and compromise, rather than to her own valour and exertion, for security against

a system, from which she never would be delivered, till either the principle was extinguished, or till its strength was exhausted. That principle had been faithfully applied, without distinction, against every nation in Europe, and against some out of Europe. A man could not look at the map of Europe, and lay his hand upon that country against which France had not either declared an open and aggressive war, or violated some positive treaty, or broken some recognized principle of the law of nations.

Here he took a rapid view of the aggressive spirit and hostile conduct of France, against independent and neutral states, previous to the war with England; he shewed that no project for dismembering the French territory had entered into the projects of Austria and Prussia; that the pretended treaty of Pavia was a clumsy forgery; that the declaration of Pilnitz related solely to the imprisonment of Louis the 16th, and had never been acted upon; and, in short, that there was neither excuse nor pretext for the repeated attacks made by France on the neighbouring powers. Mr. Pitt then reviewed the revolutionary proceedings of France, and her treatment of foreign powers, subsequently to that period, and down to the treaty of Campo Formio, and the surrender of Venice to Austria.

Mr. Erskine, adopting the sentiments of Talleyrand, had told the House, that all the French conquests were produced by the operations of the Allies. It was when they were pressed on all sides, when their own territory was in danger, when their own independence was in question, when the confederacy appeared too strong, it was then they used the means with which their power and their courage supplied them; and, "attacked upon all sides, they carried every where their defensive arms." Mr. Pitt disclaimed all intention of misrepresenting his learned antagonist, but he understood him to speak of this sentiment with approbation.—The sentiment itself was this;—that if a nation was unjustly attacked in any one quarter by others, she could not stop to consider by whom, but must find means of strength in other quarters, no matter where; and was justified in attacking, in her turn, those with whom she was at peace, and from whom she had received no species of provocation. Mr. Pitt

had proved that no attack was made upon France, but, if it had been made, he maintained, that the whole ground upon which that argument was founded could not be tolerated. "In the name of the laws of nature and of nations," said he, "in the name of every thing that is sacred and honourable, I demur to that plea, and I tell that honourable and learned gentleman, that he would do well to look again into the law of nations, before he ventures to come to this House, to give the sanction of his authority to so dreadful and execrable a system."

Mr. Erskine here denied having maintained such a proposition;—when Mr. Pitt expressed his hope that, if such were the case, he would transfer some portion of the indignation which he had hitherto lavished upon the declaration of the British ministers to the note of the French secretary. Though Mr. Eskine disclaimed the principle, the French note avowed it; and Mr. Pitt contended, without the fear of contradiction, that it was the principle upon which France had uniformly acted. But Mr. Erskine had himself asserted, and maintained, in the whole course of his argument, that the pressure of the war upon France imposed upon her the necessity of those exertions, which produced most of the enormities of the Revolution, and most of the enormities practised against the other countries of Europe. The House was called upon to recollect, that, in the year 1796, when all those horrors in Italy were beginning, which were the strongest illustrations of the general character of the French Revolution, the British Ministers had begun that negotiation to which Mr. Erskine had referred. England then possessed numerous conquests; England, though not having, at that time, had the advantage of three of her most splendid victories, England, even then, appeared undisputed mistress of the sea; England, having then engrossed the whole wealth of the Colonial world; England having lost nothing of her original possessions; England then came forward proposing general peace, and offering——what? Not the dismemberment, not the partition, of ancient France, but the return of a part of those conquests, no one of which could be retained, but in direct contradiction to that original and solemn pledge which was now referred to, as *the* proof of the just and moderate disposition of the French Republic. Yet

even this offer was not sufficient to procure peace, or to arrest the progress of France in her *defensive* operations against other unoffending countries. From the pages, however, of Mr. Erskine's pamphlet, (which, after all its editions, was now fresher in *his* memory, than in that of any other person in that House, or in the country,) he was furnished with an argument on the result of the negotiation, on which he appeared confidently to rely. He maintained, that the single point on which the negotiation was broken off, was the question of the possession of the Austrian Netherlands, and that it was, therefore, on that ground only that the war had been continued. But the question then at issue was not, whether the Netherlands should, in fact, be restored; though even on that question he was not, like Mr. Erskine, unprepared to give any opinion: he was ready to say, that to leave that territory in the possession of France would be obviously dangerous to the interests of this country, and inconsistent with the policy which it had uniformly pursued, at every period in which it had concerned itself in the general system of the Continent; but it was not on the decision of this question of expediency and policy that the issue of the negotiation then turned; what was required of us by France was, not merely that we should acquiesce in her retention of the Netherlands, but that, as preliminary to all treaty, and before entering upon the discussion of terms, we should recognize the principle, that whatever France, in time of war, had annexed to the Republic, must remain inseparable for ever, and could not become the subject of negotiation. In the refusal of such a preliminary England was only resisting the claim of France to arrogate to herself the power of controlling by her own separate and municipal acts, the rights and interests of other countries, and moulding at her discretion, a new and general code of the law of nations.

In reviewing the issue of this negotiation, it was important to observe, that France, who began by abjuring a love of conquest, was desired to give up no portion of her own territory, nor even all that she had conquered; it was offered to restore to her all that had been taken from her; and when she rejected propositions of this nature, and preferred to their acceptance a continuance of the war, were we

to be told of the unrelenting hostility of the combined powers, for which France was to inflict vengeance on other countries, and which was to justify the subversion of every established government, and the destruction of property, religion, and domestic comfort, from one end of Italy to the other? Such was the effect of the wars against Modena, against Genoa, against Tuscany, against Venice, against Rome, and against Naples; all of which France either engaged in, or prosecuted, subsequent to the period at which these terms of peace were offered.

In 1797, when France had reduced the powers of the Continent to a passive state, by a precarious peace, which left her in possession of all her conquests, Great Britain again renewed her pacific propositions, under different circumstances. She now had nothing to ask from France; she would have left her in possession of all her territories, natural and acquired; she offered to restore every thing which she had taken from France; and she only demanded, as some indemnification for herself, certain posts, which had been wrested from Holland, and which were necessary for the security of the British possessions in the East.—This proposal, also, was proudly refused.

In further proof of the aggressive disposition of the French Republic, Mr. Pitt adverted to her conduct in the invasion of a neutral and friendly country, the moment she was relieved from the pressure of the German war. He described the hapless fate of Switzerland in pathetic terms; and truly stated it, as stamping with an indelible mark of infamy, that systematic aggression, which had been prosecuted with an unrelenting spirit, which could not be subdued in adversity, which could not be appeased in prosperity, which neither solemn professions, nor the general law of nations, nor the obligations of treaties, whenever contracted, could restrain from the subversion of every state into which, either by force or fraud, their arms could penetrate. He then desired to be told, whether the disasters of Europe were to be charged upon the provocation of this Country and its allies, or on the inherent principle of the French Revolution, of which the natural result produced

so much misery and carnage in France, and carried desolation and terror over so large a portion of the world.

He next briefly alluded to the scandalous conduct of the French government towards America, stained with every mark of corruption, and every feature of injustice and tyranny; and then called the attention of the House to the attack upon Egypt and Malta. Inconsiderable as the island of Malta might be thought, in comparison with the extensive countries which the arms of republican France had desolated, it was a territory, the government of which had long been recognized by every state of Europe, against which France pretended no cause of war, and whose independence was as dear to itself, and as sacred, as that of any country in Europe. It was, in fact, not unimportant, from its local situation, to the other powers of Europe, but, in proportion as its importance might be diminished, the instance would only serve the more to illustrate and confirm the proposition which Mr. Pitt had maintained. The all-searching eye of the French revolution looked to every part of Europe, and every quarter of the world, in which could be found an object either of acquisition, or of plunder. Nothing was too great for the temerity of its ambition, nothing too small or insignificant for the grasp of its rapacity. From Malta Buonaparté repaired to Egypt. The attack was made, pretences were held out by the French to the natives of that country, in the name of the French King, whom they had murdered; they pretended to have the approbation of the Grand Seignior, whose territories they were violating; their project was carried on by proclaiming that France had been reconciled to the Mussulman faith, had abjured that of christianity, or as Buonaparté, in his impious language, termed it, of *the sect of the Messiah!*

One principal cause of this unparalleled outrage was the acquisition of means for attacking the British power in India; but another, and a more potent, motive, as appeared by the French statements, was the division and partition of the territories of what they thought a falling power. This attack was accompanied, as has been seen, by an attempt on the English possessions in the East, made on true revolutionary principles. In Europe, the propagation of the principles of

France had uniformly prepared the way for the progress of her arms. To India, the lovers of peace had sent the messengers of jacobinism, for the purpose of inculcating war in those distant regions, on jacobin principles, and of forming jacobin clubs, which they actually succeeded in establishing; and which, in most respects, resembled the European model, but which were distinguished by this peculiarity, that they were required to swear, in one breath, *hatred to tyranny, the love of liberty, and the destruction of all Kings and Sovereigns—except the good and faithful ally of the French Republic,* CITIZEN TIPPOO.

Tracing this system to its source, Mr. Pitt truly described it as combining an insatiable love of aggrandizement, with an implacable spirit of destruction, directed against all the civil and religious institutions of every country. This was the first moving and acting spirit of the French revolution; the spirit which gave it animation at its birth, the spirit which would not desert it till the moment of its dissolution; "which grew with its growth, and strengthened with its strength; but which had not abated under its misfortunes, nor declined in its decay. It was the spirit which had actuated every successive ruler of the Republic from Brissot to Buonaparte. Its characters were not the effect of accident, but resulted from the alliance of the most horrid principles with the most horrid means. And hence arose all the miseries which had afflicted Europe.

The first fundamental principle of the revolution was to bribe the poor against the rich, by proposing to transfer into new hands, on the delusive notion of equality, and in breach of every principle of justice, the whole property of the country. The practical application of this principle was to devote the whole of that property to indiscriminate plunder, and to make it the foundation of a revolutionary system of finance, productive in proportion to the misery and desolation which it created. It had been accompanied by an unwearied spirit of proselytism, diffusing itself over all the nations of the earth; a spirit which could apply itself to all circumstances and all situations; which could furnish a list of grievances, and hold out a promise of redress, equally to all nations; which inspired the teachers of French liberty with the

hope of alike recommending themselves to those who lived under the feudal code of the German empire; to the various states of Italy, under all their different institutions; to the old Republicans of Holland; and to the new Republicans of America; to the Catholics of Ireland, whom it was to deliver from Protestant usurpation; to the Protestants of Switzerland, whom it was to release from Popish superstition; and to the Mussulmans of Egypt, whom it was to emancipate from Christian persecution; to the remote Indian, blindly bigoted to his ancient rites; and to the natives of Great Britain, enjoying the perfection of practical freedom, and justly attached to their constitution, from the joint result of habit, of reason, and of experience. The last distinguished feature was a perfidy which nothing could bind, which no tie of treaty, no sense of the principles generally received among nations, no obligation, human or divine, could restrain. Thus qualified, thus armed for destruction, the genius of the French revolution marched forth, the terror and dismay of the world. Every nation had, in its turn, been the witness, many had been the victims, of its principles; and it was left for Britons to decide, whether they would compromise with such a danger, while they had yet resources to supply the sinews of war, while the heart and spirit of the country was yet unbroken, and while they had the means of calling forth and supporting a powerful co-operation in Europe.

After this able sketch of the revolutionary character, and of its effects on the general state of the European commonwealth, Mr. Pitt described another part of its attributes, which had materially influenced him in rejecting the loose overtures of the French Consul; the instability of the government, which had been subject to perpetual fluctuations. Such, indeed, had been the incredible rapidity with which the revolutions in France had succeeded each other, that the names of those ephemeral demagogues who had exercised absolute power, under the pretence of liberty, might almost be numbered by the years of the revolution; and each of the new constitutions which, under the same pretence, had, in its turn, been imposed by force on France, every one of which was alike founded upon principles which professed to be universal, and was intended to be established and perpetuated among all

the nations of the earth, would be found, upon an average, to have each lasted about two years.

Under such a perpetual situation and change, both in the form of the government, and in the persons of the rulers, Mr. Pitt contended no security either had been found, or could now be obtained. In proof of this position, he referred to the memorable speech of Boulay de la Meurthe, who, as has been seen, was selected to report to a legislative assembly, surrounded by a file of grenadiers, the new form of liberty which France was destined to enjoy, under the mild auspices of General Buonaparté. From this mouth and organ of the new government, the following important lesson proceeded:—"It is easy to conceive why peace was not concluded before the establishment of the constitutional government. The only government which then existed described itself as revolutionary; it was, in fact, only the tyranny of a few men who were soon overthrown by others, and it consequently presented no stability of principles or of views, no security either with respect to men, or with respect to things.

"It should seem that that stability, and that security, ought to have resulted from the establishment, and to have been the effect, of the constitutional system; and yet they did not exist more, perhaps even less, than they had done before. In truth, we did make some partial treaties; we signed a Continental peace, and a general congress was held to confirm it; but these treaties, these diplomatic conferences, appear to have been the source of a new war, more inveterate and more sanguinary than before.

"Before the 18th of Fructidor, (September 4th) of the 5th year, the French government exhibited to foreign nations so uncertain an existence that they refused to treat with it. After that great event, the whole power was absorbed in the Directory; the Legislative Body could hardly be said to have existed; treaties of peace were broken, and war carried every where, without its participation. The same Directory, after having intimidated all Europe, and destroyed, at its pleasure, several governments, not knowing how to make either peace or war, or even

how to establish itself, was overturned by a breath, on the thirteenth of Prairial, (June 18th) to make room for other men, influenced, perhaps, by different views, or who might be governed by different principles. Judging, then, only from notorious facts, the French government must be considered as exhibiting nothing fixed, in respect either to men or to things."

Such was the picture of France under all its successive governments, down to the period of the last revolution, drawn by the hand of one of her own legislators; and such was the state of that country, with the rulers of which the Opposition had so repeatedly called upon the English Ministers to make peace, constantly insisting, that peace was not only practicable, but easy of attainment, and as secure as any treaty could be between long-established governments!

Mr. Pitt next examined the *present* state of France.—A change had taken place in the description and form of the sovereign authority; a supreme power was placed at the head of that nominal republic, with a more open avowal of military despotism than at any former period; with a more open, and undisguised abandonment of the names and pretences under which that despotism long attempted to conceal itself. The different institutions, republican in their form and appearance, which were before the instruments of that despotism, were now annihilated; they had given way to the absolute power of one man, concentrating in himself all the authority of the state, and differing from other monarchs only in this—that, as Mr. Canning, with his peculiar felicity of expression, had truly stated it, he wielded a sword instead of a sceptre. What, then, was the confidence to be derived either from the frame of the government, or from the character and past conduct of the person who was now the absolute ruler of France?

He asked the House, if they had seen a man, of whom they had no previous knowledge, suddenly invested with the sovereign authority of the country; entrusted with the power of taxation, with the power of the sword, the power of war and peace, the unlimited power of commanding the resources, of disposing of the lives and fortunes, of every

man in France; if they had seen, at the same moment, all the inferior machinery of the revolution, which, under the variety of successive shocks, had kept the system in motion, still remaining entire; all that, by requisition and plunder, had given activity to the revolutionary system of finance, and had furnished the means of creating an army, by converting every man, who was of age to bear arms, into a soldier, not for the defence of his own country, but for the sake of carrying unprovoked war into surrounding countries; if they had seen all the subordinate instruments of Jacobin power subsisting in their full force, and retaining (to use the French phrase) all their original organization; and had then observed this single change in the conduct of their affairs, that there was now one man, with no rival to thwart his measures, no colleague to divide his powers, no council to control his operations, no liberty of speaking or writing, no expression of public opinion, to check, or to influence his conduct; under such circumstances, would they be wrong to pause, and wait for the evidence of facts, and experience, before they consented to trust their safety to the forbearance of a single man, in such a situation, and to relinquish those means of defence which had hitherto carried them safe through all the storms of the revolution? and if they were to ask, what were the principles and character of this stranger, to whom Fortune had suddenly committed the concerns of a great and powerful nation?

But was this the real state of the present question?—Were they talking of a stranger of whom they had heard nothing?—No, they had heard of him; they and Europe, and the world, had heard both of him, and of the satellites by whom he was surrounded; and it was impossible, Mr. Pitt contended, to discuss fairly the propriety of any answer which could be returned to his overtures of negotiation, without taking into consideration the inferences to be drawn from his personal character and conduct. He knew it was the fashion of some to represent any reference to topics of this nature as invidious and irritating; but the truth was, that they rose unavoidably out of the very nature of the question. Would it have been possible for Ministers to discharge their duty, in offering their advice to their Sovereign, either for accepting or declining negotiation, without taking into their account the reliance to be placed on the disposition and

the principles of the person, on whose disposition and principles the security to be obtained by treaty must, in the present circumstances, principally depend? Would they act honestly or candidly towards Parliament, and towards the country, if, having been guided by these considerations, they forbore to state publicly, and distinctly, the real grounds which had influenced their decision; and if, from a false delicacy, they purposely declined the examination of a point the most essential towards enabling Parliament to form a just determination on so important a subject?

Having thus established the necessity of inquiring into the character and conduct of Napoleone Buonaparté, Mr. Pitt proceeded to trace him *ab ovo*, from the moment when he first emerged from meanness, and obscurity, to figure on the revolutionary stage, and to pave the way, through murder and desolation, to the Throne of the Bourbons. The Opposition had told the House, that the late overtures formed his *second attempt* at general pacification, and hence they inferred the reality of his pacific disposition. But how, Mr. Pitt asked, had this second attempt been conducted? There was, indeed, as Mr. Erskine had ingeniously discovered, a word in the first declaration which referred to general peace, and which stated this to be the second time in which the Consul had endeavoured to accomplish that object. The Ministers had thought fit, for the reasons assigned, to decline altogether the proposal for treating under the present circumstances, but, at the same time, they expressly stated, that, whenever the moment for treating should arrive, they would in no case treat but in conjunction with his Majesties allies. This general refusal to negotiate, at the present moment, did not prevent the Consul from renewing his overtures; but were they renewed for the purpose of general pacification? Though he had hinted at a general peace in the terms of his first note; though Ministers had shewn, by their answer, that they deemed negotiation inadmissible; though they had added, that, even at any future period, they would treat only in conjunction with our allies; what was the proposal contained in his last note? To treat, not for a *general peace*, but for a *separate peace* between Great Britain and France.

Such was the second attempt to effect a *general pacification*: a proposal for a *separate* treaty with Great Britain. What had been the first? The conclusion of a *separate* treaty with Austria; and, in addition to this fact, there were two anecdotes connected with the conclusion of that treaty, which were sufficient to illustrate the disposition of this pacificator of Europe. This very treaty of Campo Formio was ostentatiously professed to be concluded with the Emperor, for the purpose of enabling Buonaparté to take the command of the army of England, and to dictate a separate peace with this country on the banks of the Thames. But there was this additional circumstance, singular beyond all conception, considering that the House was now referred to the treaty of Campo Formio as a proof of the personal disposition of the Consul to general peace; he sent his two confidential and chosen friends, *Berthier* and *Monge*, charged to communicate to the Directory this same treaty; to announce to them that one enemy was humbled, that the war with Austria was terminated, and, therefore, that now was the moment to prosecute their operations against England; they used, on this occasion, the memorable words,—"*The kingdom of Great Britain and the French Republic cannot exist together.*" This was the solemn declaration of the deputies and ambassadors of Buonaparté himself, offering to the Directory the first fruits of this first attempt at general pacification.

Having removed the ground of this argument, Mr. Pitt called upon the House to follow Buonaparté through the different stages of the French revolution, in order to judge how far he was to be regarded as a security against revolutionary principles; and to determine what reliance could be placed on his engagements with other countries, by ascertaining how he had observed his engagements to his own. When the constitution of the third year was established under Barras, that Constitution, (as has been seen) was imposed by the arms of Buonaparté, then commanding the army of the Triumvirate in Paris. To that Constitution he solemnly swore fidelity. How often he had repeated the same oath Mr. Pitt professed not to know; but twice, at least, he knew that he had not only repeated it himself, but had tendered it to others, under circumstances too striking not to be stated.

The House, Mr. Pitt observed, could not have forgotten the revolution of the fourth of September, which produced the dismissal of Lord Malmesbury from Lille. How was that revolution procured?—Chiefly by the promise of Buonaparté (in the name of his army) decidedly to support the Directory in those measures which led to the infringement and violation of every thing which the authors of the Constitution of 1795, or its adherents, could consider as fundamental, and which established a system of despotism inferior only to that now realized in his own person. Immediately before this event, in the midst of the desolation and bloodshed of Italy, he had received the sacred present of new banners from the Directory;—he delivered them to his army with this exhortation: "Let us swear, fellow-soldiers, by the manes of the patriots who have died by our side, eternal hatred to the enemies of the constitution of the third year:" that very constitution which he soon after enabled the Directory to violate, and which, at the head of his grenadiers, he had now finally destroyed. Nay, that oath was again renewed in the midst of that very scene which was exhibited at Saint Cloud;—the oath of fidelity to the constitution of the third year was administered to all the members of the assembly then sitting, (under the terror of the bayonet) as the solemn preparation for the business of the day; and the morning was ushered in with swearing attachment to the constitution, that the evening might close with its destruction.

Such was the fidelity which Buonaparté had displayed in the observance of what might be called his patriotic engagements; whence might be inferred, even without the evidence of facts, what would be his conduct in his treaties or engagements with foreign countries. But so many facts existed that the advantage afforded by this *inferential* argument could easily be dispensed with. Mr. Pitt truly stated, that if the House looked at the dreadful catalogue of all the breaches of treaty, all the acts of perfidy at which he had only glanced, and which were precisely commensurate with the number of treaties which the Republic had made; (for he had sought in vain for any one which it had made, and which it had not broken) if they traced the history of them all from the beginning of the revolution to the present time, or if they selected those which had been accompanied by the most atrocious cruelty, and marked

the most strongly with the characteristic features of the revolution, the name of Buonaparté would be found allied to more of them than that of any other man who could be handed down in the history of the crimes and miseries of the last ten years. His name would be recorded with the horrors committed in Italy, in the memorable campaign of 1796 and 1797, in the Milanese, in Genoa, in Modena, in Tuscany, in Rome, and in Venice.

Mr. Pitt proceeded to give a brief abstract of his enormities in many different states. After a short description of his conduct in the Milanese, in Modena, and the neighbouring country, and in Tuscany, he gave some account of his scandalous proceeding in Genoa, which afforded a striking instance of the revolutionary means employed for the destruction of independent governments. A French Minister was, at that time, resident at Genoa, which was acknowledged by France to be in a state of neutrality and friendship. In breach of this neutrality, Buonaparté began, in the year 1796, with the demand of a loan; he afterwards, from the month of September, required and enforced the payment of a monthly subsidy, to the amount which he thought proper to stipulate; these transactions were accompanied with repeated assurances and protestations of friendship; they were followed in May, 1797, by a conspiracy against the government, fomented by the emissaries of the French embassy, and conducted by the partisans of France, encouraged and afterwards protected by the French Minister. The conspirators failed in their first attempt; overpowered by the courage and voluntary exertions of the inhabitants, their force was dispersed, and many of their number were arrested. Buonaparté instantly considered the defeat of the conspirators as an act of agression against the French Republic; he dispatched an aide-de-camp with an order to the Senate of this Independent State; first, to release all the French who were detained; secondly, to punish those who had arrested them; thirdly, to declare that they had had no share in the insurrection; and, fourthly, to disarm the people. Several French prisoners were immediately released, and a proclamation was preparing to disarm the inhabitants, when, by a second note, Buonaparté required the arrest of the three Inquisitors of State, and immediate alterations in the constitution; he accompanied this with an order to the French Minister

to quit Genoa, if his commands were not immediately carried into execution; at the same moment his troops entered the territory of the Republic, and, shortly after, the councils, intimidated and overpowered, abdicated their functions. Three deputies were then sent to Buonaparté, to receive from him a new constitution; on the 6th of June, after the conferences at Montebello, he signed a convention, or rather issued a decree, by which he fixed the new form of their government; he, himself, named, provisionally, all the members who were to compose it, and he required the payment of seven millions of livres, (about £300,000 sterling) as the price of the subversion of their constitution, and their independence. These transactions required but one short comment; it was to be found in the official account given of them at Paris, in the following memorable words: "General Buonaparté has pursued the only line of conduct which could be allowed in the representative of a nation which has supported the war only to procure the solemn acknowledgement of the right of nations to change the form of their government. He contributed nothing towards the revolution of Genoa, but he seized the first moment to acknowledge the new government, as soon as he saw that it was the result of the wishes of the people."*

It was unnecessary, Mr. Pitt thought, to dwell on the wanton attacks against Rome, under the direction of Buonaparté himself, in the year 1796, and in the beginning of 1797, which led, first, to the treaty of Tolentino, concluded by Buonaparté, in which, by enormous sacrifices, the Pope was allowed to purchase the acknowledgement of his authority as a Sovereign Prince; and, secondly, to the violation of that very treaty, and to the subversion of the papal authority by Joseph Buonaparté, the brother and the agent of the General, and the Minister of the French Republic to the Holy See; a transaction accompanied by outrages and insults towards the pious and venerable Pontiff, (in spite of the sanctity of his age, and the unsullied purity of his character) which, even to a Protestant, seemed hardly short of the guilt of sacrilege.

* Le Redacteur Officiel, June 30, 1797.

But, of all the disgusting and tragical scenes which took place in Italy, in the course of this period, those which passed at Venice were, perhaps, the most striking, and the most characteristic. In May, 1796, the French army, under Buonaparté in the full tide of its success against the Austrians, first approached the territories of this Republic, which, from the commencement of the war, had observed a rigid neutrality. Their entrance on these territories was, as usual, accompanied by a solemn proclamation in the name of their General.—"Buonaparté, to the Republic of Venice; it is to deliver the finest country in Europe from the iron yoke of the proud house of Austria, that the French army has braved obstacles the most difficult to surmount. Victory, in union with justice, has crowned its efforts. The wreck of the enemy's army has retired behind the Mincio. The French army, in order to follow them, passes over the territory of the Republic of Venice; but it will never forget that ancient friendship unites the two Republics. Religion, government, customs, and property, shall be respected. That the people may be without apprehension, the most severe discipline shall be maintained. All that may be provided for the army shall be faithfully paid for in money. The General-in-chief engages the officers of the Republic of Venice, the Magistrates, and the Priests, to make known these sentiments to the people, in order that confidence may cement that friendship which has so long united the two nations, faithful in the path of honour, as in that of victory. The French soldier is terrible only to the enemies of his liberty and his government—Buonaparté."

This proclamation was followed by exactions similar to those which were practised against Genoa, by the renewal of similar professions of friendship, and the use of similar means to excite insurrection. At length, in the Spring of 1797, occasion was taken, from disturbances thus excited, to forge, in the name of the Venetian government, a proclamation,* hostile to France; and this proceeding was made the ground for military execution against the country, and for effecting, by force, the subversion of its ancient government, and the establishment of the democratic forms of the French revolution. This revolution was sealed

* See an account of this transaction in the Proclamation of the Senate of Venice, April 12, 1798.

by a treaty, signed in May, 1797, between Buonaparté and Commissioners appointed on the part of the new Revolutionary Government of Venice. By the second and third secret articles of this treaty Venice agreed to give, as a ransom, or rather to purchase an exemption from all further exactions or demands, the sum of three millions of livres, (about £125,000 sterling) the value of three millions more in articles of naval supply, and three ships of the line; and it received, in return, assurances of the friendship and support of the French Republic. Immediately after the signature of this treaty, the arsenal, the library, and the palace of Saint Mark, were ransacked and plundered, and heavy additional contributions were imposed upon the inhabitants; and, in not more than four months afterwards, this very Republic of Venice, united by alliance to France, the creature of Buonaparté himself, from whom it had received the present of French liberty, was, by the same Buonaparté, transferred, under the treaty of Campo Formio, to "that iron yoke of the proud House of Austria," to deliver it from which he had represented, in his first proclamation, to be the great object of all his operations.

All this was followed by the memorable expedition into Egypt, which Mr. Pitt mentioned, not merely because it formed a principal article in the catalogue of those acts of violence and perfidy in which Buonaparté had been engaged; not merely because it was an enterprize peculiarly his own, of which he was himself the planner, the executor, and the betrayer; but chiefly because, when he returned from that country to a different scene, to take possession of a new Throne, from which he was to speak upon an equality with the Kings and Governors of Europe, he left behind him, at the moment of his departure, a specimen, which could not be mistaken, of his principles of negotiation. The *intercepted correspondence* seemed to afford the strongest grounds for believing, that his offers to the Turkish Government to evacuate Egypt were made solely with a view "*to gain time,*" that the ratification of any treaty on this subject was to be delayed with the view of finally eluding its performance, if any change of circumstances, favourable to the French, should occur in the interval. But whatever might be thought of the intention with which these offers were made, there would, at

least, be no question with respect to the credit due to the professions by which he endeavoured to prove, in Egypt, his pacific disposition. He expressly enjoined his successor, strongly and steadily to insist, in all his intercourse with the Turks, that he came to Egypt with no hostile design, and that he never meant to keep possession of the country; while, on the opposite page of the same instructions, he stated, in the most unequivocal manner, his regret at the discomfiture of his favourite project of colonizing Egypt, and of maintaining it as a territorial acquisition. Now if, in any note addressed to the Grand Vizier, or the Sultan, Buonaparté had claimed credit for the sincerity of his professions, that he forcibly invaded Egypt with no view hostile to Turkey, and solely for the purpose of molesting the British interests, was there any one argument now used to induce the House to believe his present professions to England, which might not have been equally urged, on that occasion, to the Turkish Government? Would not those professions have been equally supported by solemn asseverations, by the same reference which was now made to personal character, with this single difference, that they would then have been accompanied with one instance less of the perfidy, which there had been occasion to trace in this very transaction?

Mr. Pitt pressed his argument with considerable ingenuity and force, and then considered the plea, that it was now the *interest* of Buonaparté to make peace with England. That he had an interest in making peace, Mr. Pitt thought, was, at best, but a doubtful proposition; and that he had an interest in preserving it, he regarded as still more uncertain. He did not deny that it was his interest to *negotiate*, and, above all, to engage this country in a separate negotiation, in order to loosen and dissolve the whole system of the confederacy on the Continent; to palsy, at once, the arms of Russia or of Austria, or of any other country that might look to England for support; and then either to break off his separate treaty, or, if he should have concluded it, to apply the lesson which was taught in his school of policy in Egypt; and to revive, at his pleasure, those claims of indemnification which might *have been reserved for some future opportunity.*

This was precisely the interest which he had in negotiation; but on what grounds were Ministers to be convinced that he had an interest in concluding and observing a solid and permanent pacification? Under all the circumstances of his personal character and his newly-acquired power, what other security had he for retaining that power, but the sword? His hold upon France was the sword, and he had no other. Was he connected with the soil, or with the habits, the affections, or the prejudices of the country? He was a stranger, a foreigner, and an usurper; he united in his own person every thing that a pure Republican must detest; every thing that an enraged Jacobin had abjured; every thing that a sincere and faithful royalist must feel as an insult. If he was opposed at any time in his career, what was his appeal? *He appealed to his fortune*;—in other words, to his army and his sword. Placing, then, his whole reliance upon military support, could he afford to let his military renown pass away, to let his laurels wither, to let the memory of his achievements sink in obscurity? Was it certain that, with his army confined within France, and restrained from inroads upon her neighbours, he could maintain at his devotion, a force sufficiently numerous to support his power? Having no object but the possession of absolute dominion, no passion but military glory, was it certain that he could feel such an interest in permanent peace, as would justify this country in laying down her arms, reducing her expence, and relinquishing her means of security, on the faith of his engagements? Would it be believed that, after the conclusion of peace, he would not still sigh over the lost trophies of Egypt, wrested from him by the celebrated victory of Aboukir, and the brilliant exertions of that heroic band of British seamen, whose influence and example rendered the Turkish troops invincible at Acra? Could he forget that the effect of these exploits enabled Austria and Russia, in one campaign, to recover from France all which she had acquired by his victories, to dissolve the charm which, for a time had fascinated Europe, and to shew that their Generals, contending in a just cause, could efface, even by their success and their military glory, the most dazzling triumphs of his victories and desolating ambition?

Could it be believed that, with these impressions on his mind, if,

after a year, eighteen months, or two years, of peace had elapsed, he should be tempted by the appearance of a fresh insurrection in Ireland, encouraged by renewed and unrestrained communication with France, and fomented by the fresh infusion of Jacobin principles; if we were, at such a moment, without a fleet to watch the ports of France, or to guard the coasts of Ireland, without a disposable army, or an embodied militia, capable of supplying a speedy and adequate reinforcement, and that he had the means of suddenly transporting thither a body of twenty or thirty thousand French troops; could it be believed, that, at such a moment, his ambitious and vindictive spirit would be restrained by the recollection of engagements, or the obligation of treaty? Or if, in some new crisis of difficulty and danger to the Ottoman Empire, with no British navy in the Mediterranean, no confederacy formed, no force collected to support it, an opportunity should present itself for resuming the abandoned expedition to Egypt, for renewing the avowed and favourite project of conquering and colonizing that rich and fertile country, and of acquiring the means of wounding some of the vital parts of English prosperity, and to plunder the treasures of the East, in order to fill the bankrupt coffers of France, would it be the interest of Buonaparté, under such circumstances, or his principles, his moderation, his love of peace, his aversion from conquest, and his regard for the independence of other nations;—would it be all, or any of these, that would secure England against an attempt, which would leave her only the option of submitting, without a struggle, to certain loss and disgrace, or of renewing the contest which she had prematurely terminated, and renewing it without allies, without preparation, with diminished means, and with increased difficulty and hazard?

It was clear then, that no grounds of security, for the rigid observance of a treaty of peace, could be derived from either the professions, the character, or the conduct, of the First Consul of France. It remained, then, to consider whether the probable stability of his power could supply this deficiency. The arguments which Mr. Pitt advanced, on this part of the question, were strong and ingenious; founded on the experience of past times; and theoretically just. But as, unhappily, though true in their general application, as well as in the principle

whence they were derived, they have proved inapplicable to the particular case of the Corsican Usurper, who, whether he be an instrument in the hand of God, (whose mysterious dispensations, in their origin and progress, elude human penetration, defeat human sagacity, and mock human wisdom,) to work good out of evil, or to whatever cause it may be imputable, has baffled every argument which reason could suggest, knowledge could recommend, or eloquence enforce, it becomes needless to repeat them.

But, though Mr. Pitt's deductions from the History of the World have proved inapplicable to the particular case to which, in this instance, they were applied; they were not less just, nor founded in less true and solid principles, than one of the positions of the first promoters of the French Revolution, that the force of standing armies was vain and delusive, and that no artificial power could resist the effects of public opinion. Yet, just and true in theory, and justified by the experience of past ages, as this position unquestionably was, it, nevertheless, stands contradicted and belied, by the whole course of the French Revolution. France, so far from exhibiting a proof of the predominant power of public opinion over military force, supplies the strongest exception to the doctrine. Through every stage of the revolution, from the deposition of the Sixteenth Louis to the establishment of the Imperial usurpation, in the person of the Corsican, military force, and that alone, has governed; and public opinion, like "the still small voice of conscience," has scarcely been heard. Mr. Pitt, however, considered this as an exception only to a general truth; he still believed that, in every civilized country, (not enslaved by a Jacobin faction) public opinion was the only sure support of any government; and he believed it with the more satisfaction, from a conviction, that, if the present contest should be brought to a happy conclusion, the established governments of Europe would stand upon that rock firmer than ever; and whatever might be the defects of any particular constitution, those who live under it would prefer its continuance to the experiment of changes which might plunge them in the unfathomable abyss of revolution, or extricate them from it, only to expose them to the terrors of military despotism. Volumes, indeed, have been

written, in support of the paramount influence of public opinion on the political and moral state of the civilized world; and no facts had occurred to shake the beneficial doctrine thus sought to be inculcated, till the appearance of that phenomenon, the French Revolution, which has set all reason, and all experience at defiance; unless, indeed, Mr. Sheridan's assertion be correct, that the revolution in the British government, in 1688, was carried by an inconsiderable minority, against the great mass of the community.

To prevent false inferences from being drawn by his political opponents, from his objections to treat with Buonaparté at the present moment, Mr. Pitt took care specifically to state, that a time might arrive when it would be expedient to treat with him. If there should be an appearance that the policy of France was, at length, guided by different maxims from those which had hitherto prevailed; if signs of stability should afterwards be seen in the government, which were not now to be traced; if the progress of the allied army should not call forth such a spirit in France, as to make it probable that the act of the country itself would destroy the system now prevailing; if the danger, the difficulty, the risk, of continuing the contest should increase, while the hope of complete ultimate success should be diminished; all these, in their true place, were considerations which, with himself, and (he could answer for it) with every one of his colleagues, would have their just weight. But, at present, these considerations all operated one way; and there was no reasonable ground to expect such a change as would justify the hope of security, in the present state of affairs in France.

As Mr. Pitt had been asked, in the course of this debate, whether he thought he could impose monarchy upon France against the will of the nation? he said, "I never thought it, I never hoped it, I never wished it; I have thought, I have hoped, I have wished, that the time might come, when the effect of the arms of the allies might so far overpower the military force which keeps France in bondage, as to give vent and scope to the thoughts and actions of its inhabitants." Abundant proofs, indeed, had been already seen of the real disposition of a large part of the country; almost through the whole of the revolution

the Western provinces of France had been deluged with the blood of its inhabitants, obstinately contending for their ancient laws and religion. The recent revival of that war had furnished a fresh instance of the zeal which still animated these provinces in the same cause. Here Mr. Pitt contradicted a fact which had often been advanced by the French, and by their advocates in England, and stated distinctly, and said there were some persons near him, who could bear witness to the truth of the statement, that these efforts of the Royalists, in La Vendée, were not produced by any instigation from England; they were the effects of a rooted sentiment prevailing throughout that district, forced into action by the *Law of the Hostages*, and the other tyrannical measures of the Directory, at the moment when the English Ministers were endeavouring to discourage so hazardous an enterprize.

It had been urged by Mr. Erskine, as an argument against any fresh change, in France, favourable to monarchy, that every landed proprietor in France would support the existing order of things in that country from the same motive that he, and every proprietor of three per cent. stock, would join in the defence of the British Constitution. Mr. Pitt shewed that a mode might be easily adopted for satisfying the present proprietors in France, without preventing the restoration of the Emigrants to their former rights, provided there was a disposition in the people to restore the monarchy. He then adverted to the nature of the argument which Mr. Erskine had employed, and which he had strengthened with the weight of his own personal authority. Mr. Pitt said, he must do him the justice to believe, that the habits of his profession must supply him with better and nobler motives for defending a Constitution which he had had so much occasion to study and to examine, than any which he could derive from the value of his possessions, however large, in the three per cents.* even supposing them to continue to increase in price as

* By thus making *interest* the rule of political conduct, and the measure of obedience to the state, Mr. Erskine subjected himself to an obvious question, which, however, the liberal spirit of his opponent would not stoop to put. It was generally understood, that Mr. Erskine had, before this period, vested a very large proportion of the fruits of his professional labours, in the American funds; it might have been asked, then, in the event of a war between England

rapidly as they had done during the last three years, in which the security and prosperity of the country had been established by the pursuit of a system in direct opposition to the councils of Mr. Erskine and his friends.

Mr. Pitt then took a brief view of the state of the French finances, in order to shew that the monied men in France had no reason to be satisfied with the present order of things. The French five per cent. stock was, at this time, higher than it had been, and every *hundred* pounds would now produce *seventeen* pounds in the market. Such was the value of revolutionary property!

In compromise and treaty with the present revolutionary power of France, placed in the hands of Buonaparté, and retaining the same means of annoyance which it then possessed, Mr. Pitt saw little hope of concluding such a peace as would justify that liberal intercourse which was the essence of real amity; no chance of terminating the expences or the anxieties of war, or of restoring to the country any of the advantages of established tranquillity; and, as a sincere lover of peace, he could not be content with its *nominal* attainment; he must be desirous of pursuing that system which promised to attain, in the end, the permanent enjoyment of its solid and substantial blessings for this country, and for Europe. As a sincere lover of peace, he would not sacrifice it by grasping at the shadow, when the reality was not substantially within his reach.—"*Cur igitur pacem nolo? Quia infida est, quia periculosa, quia esse non potest.*"

In answer to an observation which had been made on his apparent inconsistency, in having opened a negotiation in 1797, and in refusing to negotiate now, Mr. Pitt declared himself desirous of stating, frankly

and America, involving the destruction of the Constitution of one of the two countries, in defence of *which* would Mr. Erskine, according to his own principle, feel himself disposed to fight? Arguing upon his own ground, there would be little hesitation in admitting the supposition, that the English *three per cents.* would, in such a *constitutional* struggle, have little chance against the American *six* [redacted]*nts.*

and openly, the true motives which had induced him to concur in recommending the former negotiation; and he would leave it to the House, and to the country, to judge whether his conduct, at that time, was inconsistent with the principles by which he was now guided. That revolutionary policy which he had described, that gigantic system of prodigality and bloodshed by which the efforts of France were supported, and which counted for nothing the lives and the property of a nation, had, at that period, driven us to exertions which had, in a great measure, exhausted the ordinary means of defraying our immense expenditure, and had led many of those who were the most convinced of the original justice and necessity of the war, and of the danger of Jacobin principles, to doubt the possibility of persisting in it, till complete and adequate security could be obtained. There seemed too much reason to believe, that, without some new measure to check the rapid accumulation of debt, we could no longer trust to the stability of that funding system by which the nation had been enabled to support the expence of all the different wars in which we had been engaged in the course of that century. In order to continue our exertions with vigour, it became necessary that a new and solid system of finance should be established, such as could not be rendered effectual but by the general and decided concurrence of public opinion. Such a concurrence in the strong and vigorous measures necessary for the purpose could not then be expected, but by satisfying the country, by the strongest and most decided proofs, that peace, on terms in any degree admissible, was unattainable.

Under this impression, Ministers had thought it their duty to attempt negotiation, not from the sanguine hope, even at that time, that its result could afford us complete security, but from the persuasion, that the danger arising from peace, under such circumstances, was less than that of continuing the war with precarious and inadequate means. The result of those negotiations proved, that the enemy would be satisfied with nothing less than the sacrifice of the honour and independence of the country. From this conviction, a spirit and enthusiasm were excited in the nation, which produced the efforts to which we were indebted for the subsequent change in our situation. Having witnessed that happy change, having observed the increasing prosperity and security of the

country from that period, seeing how much more satisfactory the prospects now were than any which could then have been derived from the successful result of negotiation, he had not scrupled to declare, that he considered the rupture of the negotiation, on the part of the enemy, as a fortunate circumstance for the country. But, because such were his sentiments, at this time, after reviewing what had since passed, did it follow that he was, at that period, insincere in his endeavours to obtain peace? Mr. Erskine, indeed, had assumed that he was, and he even made a concession, of which Mr. Pitt did not desire to claim the benefit:—he was willing to admit that, on the Minister's principles, and on his view of this subject, insincerity would have been justifiable. Mr. Pitt knew no plea that could justify those who were entrusted with the conduct of public affairs, in holding out to the Parliament, and to the nation, one object, while they were, in fact, pursuing another. He did, in fact, believe, at the moment, the conclusion of peace (if it could have been obtained) to be preferable to the continuance of the war, under its increasing risks and difficulties. He, therefore, wished for peace; and he sincerely laboured to obtain it; but his endeavours were frustrated by the act of the enemy. If, then, the circumstances were since changed, if what passed at that period had afforded a proof that the object aimed at was unattainable; and if all that had passed since had demonstrated, that, if peace had been then made, it would not have been durable, was he bound to repeat the same experiment, when every reason against it was strengthened by subsequent experience, and when the inducements, which led to it at that time, had ceased to exist?

Mr. Pitt observed, that the country was now possessed of ample resources, pecuniary and military, for carrying on the war till such time as peace could be concluded with a prospect of security and permanence. If we ultimately failed in the full attainment of our object, and were disappointed in our most sanguine hopes, we were more likely to gain than to lose, by the continuation of the contest. Its prolongation, even if it should not lead to the final destruction of the Jacobin system, must tend so far to weaken and exhaust it, as to give us, at least, a greater comparative security in any other termination of the war.—On all these grounds, that was not the moment at which it was consistent with our interest, or our duty, to listen to any proposals for negotiation with the

present ruler of France; but the Ministers were not, therefore, pledged to any unalterable determination as to their future conduct. In that, they must be regulated by the course of events, and it would be their duty, from time to time, to adapt their measures to any variation of circumstances, to consider how far the effects of the military operations of the allies, or of the internal disposition of France, corresponded with the present expectations of the country; and, on a view of the whole, to compare the difficulties, or risks, which might arise in the prosecution of the contest, with the prospect of ultimate success, or of the degree of advantage which might be derived from its further continuance, and to be governed by the result of all these considerations in the opinion and advice which they might offer to their Sovereign.

Mr. Fox answered the Minister, and condemned him for not having given a civil, clear, and explicit answer to the overture which had been *fairly* and *handsomely* made to him. By not having told Buonaparté, that he was desirous that the negotiation should include all the allies of England, as the means of bringing about a general peace, he had shewed his fears that the proposal would be acceded to. The people, he was convinced, were all anxious for peace, and, if it were not for the restrictive laws which deprived them of the power of speech and of writing, they would express their opinion loudly and decidedly on the subject. He knew, that it was only by public, not by a sense of duty, not by the inclination of their minds, that Ministers would ever be brought to give peace to the nation. The House divided on the question, when there appeared for the address, moved by Mr. Dundas, two hundred and sixty-five votes, and sixty-four against it.

A message was delivered to Parliament, soon after, from the King, apprizing them that he was employed in concerting measures with the Emperor of Germany, and other Continental powers, for prosecuting the war with vigour; when Mr. Pitt (on the 17th of February) moved, that a sum not exceeding half a million should be granted to his Majesty, to enable him to make such advances as might be necessary for the purpose of insuring, at an early period, the vigorous co-operation of the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria, and other powers, in the ensuing campaign, against the common enemy.

To this motion Mr. Tierney, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. William Smith, and several other Members of the Opposition, strongly objected, some on the ground that the Continental powers ought to fight their own battles, without the aid of British gold; and others, because it tended to prolong a war which they wished to terminate, at all hazards. Mr. Tierney made a peremptory call upon Ministers to define the object of the war. It was not, he said, the destruction of Jacobin principles; it might be the restoration of the House of Bourbon; but he wished Mr. Pitt, in one sentence, to state, if he could, without his *ifs* and *buts*, and special pleading ingenuity, what the object was. He was persuaded he could not; and that he called on the House to prosecute the war, and to lavish the blood and treasure of the country in its support, when no one plain satisfactory reason could be given for its continuance.

This observation appeared to Mr. Pitt one of the strangest he had ever heard advanced. Mr. Tierney defied him to state, in one sentence, what was the object of the war. He did not know whether he could do this in one *sentence*; but, in one word, he could tell him, that it was SECURITY,—security against a danger, the greatest that ever threatened the world. It was security against a danger which never existed in any past period of society. It was security against a danger which, in degree and extent, was never equalled; against a danger which threatened all the nations of the earth; against a danger which had been resisted by all the powers of Europe, and resisted by none with so much success as by this country, because by none had it been resisted so uniformly, and with so much energy. England alone, of all the nations of Europe, presented barriers the best fitted to resist its progress. We alone recognized the necessity of open war, as well with the principles, as with the practice, of the French revolution. We saw that it was to be resisted no less by arms abroad, than by precautions at home; that we were to look for protection no less to the courage of our forces, than to the wisdom of our councils; no less to military effort, than to legislative enactment. At the moment when those who now admitted the dangers of jacobinism, while they contended that it was extinct, used to palliate its atrocity, and extenuate its mischief, the House wisely saw that it was necessary to erect a double safeguard against a danger that wrought no

less by undisguised hostility than by secret machination. But how long was it that Mr. Tierney, and his friends, had discovered that the dangers of jacobinism had ceased to exist? How long was it since they found that the cause of the French revolution was not the cause of liberty?—How, or when, did Mr. Tierney discover that the jacobinism of Robespierre, of Barrere, the jacobinism of the five Directors, which he acknowledged to be real, had all vanished, and disappeared, because it had all been centered, and condensed into one man, who was reared and nursed in its bosom, whose celebrity was gained under its auspices, who was at once the child and the champion of all its atrocities and horrors. Our security in negotiation was to be this Buonaparté, who was now the sole organ of all that was formerly dangerous and pestiferous in the revolution. Jacobinism was allowed to have formerly existed, because the power was divided. Now it was single, and no longer lived. The discovery was new, and Mr. Pitt did not know how it was made.

When Mr. Tierney asked, whether the war was to be carried on till jacobinism was finally extinguished, if he meant that war was to be continued until jacobinism had either lost its sting, or had its power of doing evil abridged, Mr. Pitt said, that this was the object of our exertions. He did not say, that war must be waged until the principle of jacobinism should be extinguished in the mind of every individual; were that the object of the contest, he was afraid it could not terminate but with the present generation. He was afraid that a mind once tainted with that infection never recovered its healthful state. He was afraid that no purification would be sufficient to eradicate the poison of that foul distemper. Even those who now so loudly told the House that the danger of jacobinism was past, were endeavouring to disarm them of the means of carrying on the war, which they were waging against its remnant, by those arts which they employed for bending them down before its meridian splendour. They told them again that, by resisting that pestilent mischief, they were promoting distress, they were despising humanity. They told them that they had spent above two hundred millions for a phrase—for the words "just and necessary." "I hope, Sir," said Mr. Pitt, "that the people of this country will not be governed by words.—No, Sir, the people of England will not be so misled. We

have spent two hundred millions; but what has been the object;—what have been the fruits of this expenditure? If this country has spent two hundred millions, they have been spent to preserve the sources of its prosperity, its happiness, its glory, its freedom. Yes, Sir, we have spent that sum; and, I trust, we are ready, as I am sure we are able, to spend two hundred millions more for purposes so great and important. I trust this country is ready to exert its efforts to avail ourselves of the assistance of our allies to obtain real security, and solid peace."

Mr. Pitt examined another ground of argument assumed by Mr. Tierney, who had said that the war could not be just, because it was carried on for the restoration of the House of Bourbon;* and, secondly, that it

* Whatever Mr. Tierney's ideas might be of the justice of the attempt to secure to the Princes of the House of Bourbon the throne of their ancestors, it is most certain, that the British nation had formally, and repeatedly, guaranteed, in the most solemn manner, the possession of the Throne of France to the Princes of that House.

By the second article of the treaty of Paris, concluded in 1783, "the triple alliance of the Hague of 1717, and the quadruple alliance of London, 1718," (with other treaties therein specified) are declared to "serve as the basis of that treaty; and, for this purpose, they were both renewed and confirmed, in the best form." These treaties, then, were in full force at the period of the deposition of Louis XVI. By the treaty of Utrecht, the Kings of England and France reciprocally guaranteed their respective rights to the Thrones which they filled; but, in the triple alliance of 1717, they went still further; for, by the seventh article of that treaty, it was stipulated, that, "if the kingdoms (of France or England) *be disturbed by intestine quarrels*, "*or by rebellions on account of the said successions, or under any other pretence whatever*, the ally, thus "in trouble, shall have full right to demand the succours therein above-mentioned," that is to say, each nation was to furnish to the other, on demand, in such an event, 8,000 foot, and 2,000 horse. And, by the fourth article of the quadruple alliance, signed in 1718, to which England, France, Holland, and the German empire, were parties, England, and the two other powers, "promise to guarantee and defend *the right of succession to the kingdom of France, against* "*all persons whatsoever, who may presume to disturb the order of the said succession.*"

Now, as these treaties were solemnly renewed and confirmed by the treaty of Paris, (and their renewal and confirmation were, at that period, sanctioned with the approbation of Mr. Fox and his friends) it follows, of course, that Louis XVI. when his throne was attacked by rebels, had a right to call on the British nation to defend it with a force of 10,000 men; and that, so far from acting unjustly by a ready compliance with such a demand, the government could not have resisted it, without a palpable breach of treaty, a manifest violation of good faith, and a flagrant act of injustice.

This subject is ably discussed in a letter addressed to me, in 1800, by my late worthy and learned friend, the Reverend John Brand, "*on Buonaparté's proposals for opening a negotiation*

could not be necessary, because Ministers had refused to negotiate for peace when an opportunity for negotiation was offered them. As to the first proposition, Mr. Tierney had assumed the foundation of the argugument, and had left no ground for controverting it, or for explanation, because he said that any attempt at explanation upon that subject was the mere ambiguous unintelligible language of *ifs* and *buts*, and of special pleading. "Now, Sir," said Mr. Pitt, "I never had much liking to special pleading, and, if ever I had any, it is, by this time, almost entirely gone. He has besides so abridged me of the use of particles, that, though I am not particularly attached to the sound of an *if* or a *but*, I would be much obliged to the honourable Gentleman if he would give me some others to supply their places. Is this, however, a light matter, that it should be treated in so light a manner? The restoration of the French monarchy, I will still tell the honourable Gentleman, I consider as a most desirable object, because I think it would afford the strongest and best security to this country and to Europe. *But* this object may not be attainable; and *if* it be not attainable, we must be satisfied with the best security which we can find independent of it. Peace is most desirable to this country; *but* negotiation may be attended with greater evils than could be counterbalanced by any benefits which would result from it. And *if* this be found to be the case; *if* it afford no prospect of security; *if* it threaten all the evils which we have been long struggling to avert; *if* the prosecution of the war afford the prospect of obtaining complete security; and *if* it may be prosecuted with increasing commerce, with increasing means, and with increasing prosperity, except what may result from the visitations of the Seasons; then, I say, that it is prudent in us not to negotiate at the present moment.—These are my *buts* and my *ifs*. This is my plea, and on no other do I wish to be tried, by God and my Country."

During this discussion, a subject wholly foreign from it had been introduced into the debate, by Mr. Nicholl, the ingenious Gentleman

for peace, in which the British guarantee of the Crown of France to the House of Bourbon, contained in the triple and quadruple alliances, and renewed by the treaty of the year 1783, *is considered, together with the conduct of our national parties relating to it.*"

who, on a former occasion, had committed a trifling mistake about a parliamentary precedent which made *against* his argument instead of making *for* it, as he had supposed, and stated. This subject was the existing scarcity of corn, which, owing to two unfavourable seasons, prevailed to a considerable extent. The subject had been taken up by the Parliament, at an early period of the Session; and the Government had adopted every practicable measure to avert the dreadful effects of so alarming a calamity. The *Patriots*, however, discovered, even in this national affliction, a ground for exultation, and a means of promoting their views. They thought that, as the Government would be reduced to the necessity of expending large sums for the importation of foreign grain to supply the existing deficiency, there would not remain a sufficiency of the public revenue for the support of the war. And hence, they concluded, naturally enough, that Ministers would be compelled to throw themselves at the feet of the Corsican Usurper, and to subscribe to any terms which he might, in his wisdom and justice, chuse to impose on the country. They were aware, too, that, at all events, if they could persuade the people, that the scarcity was owing to the war, their own efforts would not fail to be powerfully assisted by popular clamour. Mr. Nicholl, impressed with these ideas, had triumphantly stated, and, as Mr. Pitt observed, with a gravity which seemed to testify his sincerity in what he advanced, that *twelve millions* would be necessary to procure that supply of grain which this country required. Mr. Pitt trusted, that it would appear, in the consideration of the report of the Corn Committee, that there had already been a very considerable supply of corn obtained, and that there was not so much to be apprehended on the score of scarcity as some supposed. But, besides that Mr. Nicholl had exaggerated the supply that would be required, he inferred, that we should not be able to find pecuniary resourses both for the war, and to obviate the danger of scarcity. Doubtless, however, there was no difficulty in supplying both demands. No man, who thought the war right and politic, would suppose that those supplies which were necessary to support it with vigour, and to bring it to a successful termination, should be withholden, because there happened to exist a scarcity which had no connection with the war, and which the prosecution of it could in no way affect. The fallacy of ascribing that scarcity to the war, was no

less unfounded in reasoning than it was mischievous in its consequences. Mr. Pitt was the more induced to testify thus publicly the disapprobation which such language excited in his mind, when he observed the insidious use that was made of it, in promoting certain measures out of doors; a language, indeed, contrary to all honest principle, and repugnant to every sentiment of public duty. The proposed subsidies were opposed only by nineteen votes, and supported by one hundred and sixty-two.

The Opposition, during this session; pursued the same line of conduct which they had observed, almost invariably, from the beginning of the contest, by harassing Ministers with perpetual questions on the precise object of the war, with a view to betray them into some unguarded admissions, which might supply a ground for exciting a popular outcry against them; and with frequent resolutions, the object of which was to compel them to open a negotiation with the enemy. Three distinct motions, of this kind, were submitted to the House of Commons, before the Parliament was prorogued. The first, by Mr. Tierney, who moved, on the last day of February, "that it was the opinion of the House, that it was both unjust and unnecessary to carry on the war, for the purpose of restoring monarchy in France;" the second, by Mr. Johnes, to the same effect, on the eighth of May; and the third, on the ninth of July, by Mr. Western. All these motions produced discussions, in which the Ministers took little part; and in which the same arguments which had been confuted, a hundred times, were again urged, with confidence undismayed by resistance, and undiminished by defeat; and they were all rejected by great and decisive majorities.

The means of raising the supplies for the year were laid before the House of Commons, on the 24th of February. They amounted to £39,500,000. The Income Tax afforded £5,300,000 towards this sum, besides £1,700,000, which was assigned, out of its produce, for the payment of a part of the interest of a loan of £18,500,000, which, with the casual, permanent, and other taxes, together with three millions, paid by the Bank, for the renewal of their charter, a vote of credit to the same amount, and five millions and a half of surplus from the consoli-

dated fund, supplied the whole expences of the year. The only interest remaining to be provided for by new taxes, was £313,000; and this was defrayed by a new duty of five per cent. on all kinds of tea, and a small augmentation of the duties on rum and brandy.

The failure of the expedition to Holland was made a subject of Parliamentary discussion, in both Houses, in the month of February. On the tenth, Mr. Sheridan introduced a motion for an inquiry into that business; and, two days after, it was brought forward in the Upper House by Lord Holland. The inquiry, however, was rejected by large majorities, on both occasions. In the Commons, Mr. Tierney observed, that the capitulation seemed to him to fix an indelible stain on the national character, and to inflict a deep wound on the soldier's honour. The observations before made on that convention will sufficiently prove my concurrence in the former part of this opinion; but I cannot consider the honour of the soldier as at all implicated in a transaction, not preceded by the defeat of the troops, and originating solely in the commander.

An act for renewing the act, enabling his Majesty to detain persons suspected of treasonable conspiracies, was passed on the 25th of February, after the usual opposition; and it soon received the royal sanction. A bill was also passed in the course of the session, in consequence of the scarcity of corn, to prevent the sale of new bread. The object of this law was to diminish the consumption of bread; it being conceived, that a man could not eat so much of stale bread as he could of new. It gave rise to a great number of convictions in the metropolis, the bakers persisting, in violation of the law, in the sale of new bread.

The attention of Parliament was called to a measure of a very different kind, by Sir Henry Mildmay, on whose motion the House of Commons, on the twenty-second of May, resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of an act made in the thirty-first year of his present Majesty, intituled, "An act to relieve, upon conditions, and under restrictions, the persons therein described, from certain penal-

ties and disabilities, to which Papists, or persons professing the Popish religion, were by law subject."

The reason assigned by Sir H. Mildmay, for this proceeding, was the alleged increase of popery, owing to the conduct of certain religious societies, which had fled from the revolutionary persecutions in France, and had found a refuge in this country. The members of these monastic institutions, not content with the asylum thus afforded them, and with the permission to exercise their religious rites with perfect freedom, had offended against the laws of the country by admitting young English-women to take the veil, and to devote themselves to a monastic life. Sir Henry paid a tribute of justice to the peaceable demeanour, and to the most unassuming and unobtrusive gratitude, of the French emigrant priests; but he declared his opinion—an opinion in which every honest and conscientious Protestant must concur—that while it was highly proper to extend the fullest toleration to monastic societies, of both sexes, already formed, it would be highly imprudent to suffer the vacancies, which might occur, to be filled up by subjects of this country;—and that the greatest care should be taken carefully to guard against the admission of any new members, whose first obligation, on entering into such societies, was subversive of those laws and liberties, which the wisdom of our ancestors long since introduced amongst us. It fell within the observation of Sir Henry himself to know, that, in each of the two monastic societies, established at Winchester, several persons had been suffered to take both veils since their residence in that city; and, as he was credibly informed, a great variety of similar instances might be produced, from different parts of the country, where these monastic institutions had been permitted to establish themselves. These practices, he thought, should be nipped in the bud, else we might live to lament that the national humanity had been abused, and that Parliament, by voting money for their subsistence, had, in some degree, been made a party to the revival of what seemed to them the most unnatural part of the Romish faith, when it might be too late to extirpate the evils which the influence of such a system might have introduced into the country. Another subject, to which he called the attention of the

House, was the recent foundation of a great variety of Catholic schools, many of which were engrafted, and were under the immediate superintendence and influence of, these monastic establishments. This fact had given considerable alarm and uneasiness to those reverend persons whose high situations in the regular church had placed the interests of the Protestant communion particularly in their hands. The resolution which he proposed was similar to a regulation which he understood to have been adopted in 1763, when the Catholic province of Canada was ceded to England, namely, to place within the protection of the law those convents which actually existed, but not to suffer, on any pretence whatever, the admission of any new members into such societies. In submitting this subject to Parliament, he had complied with the general voice of the public, laity as well as clergy. When he added, to the considerations already stated, the temptation, he might say the bribe, which was held out to the public, by offering to educate children, in these Catholic seminaries, free from any expence to their parents, he thought he was not calling upon the House for any unreasonable interference, when he suggested the expediency of revising and re-considering the present laws, and of adding such strength to the arm of the executive power as might be necessary to meet the existing emergency. He then moved the following resolutions:

"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the temporary residence in this kingdom, of certain monastic societies, should be permitted, subject to the provisions of an act passed in the thirty-third year of his present Majesty, intituled, "an act for establishing regulations respecting aliens arriving in this kingdom, or resident therein, in certain cases;" and that the admission of any new members into such societies should be prohibited, and that the names and numbers of persons belonging thereto should be annually returned to the Court of Quarter-Sessions, in which they reside.

"That all persons, undertaking the public education of youth in the Romish faith, should also return annually to the court a list, containing the names and number of their pupils, together with the names and places of abode of their respective parents; and that a power be given

to magistrates, appointed by the Quarter-Sessions, to inspect such institutions at pleasure."

The resolutions were supported by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Bragge, Mr. Newbolt, and Mr. Johnes; and were opposed by Mr. Hobhouse and Dr. Lawrence. The former observed, that the provisions of the *alien-act* were sufficient to provide a remedy for the evil complained of; but he was properly answered, that that act could have no reference to the conduct of British subjects. On the twenty-third of June, a bill, founded on the resolution, was introduced into the House of Commons, when it produced a warm debate, supported, on the one side, by Messrs. Windham and Sheridan, and, on the other, by Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir William Scott, Mr. Dudley Ryder, Mr. Erskine, and Mr. Perceval. Mr. Windham ridiculed the idea of existing danger from the Catholic religion, at a time when it had been proscribed in France, and persecuted in most of the Continental States;—he considered the cry of "the church is in danger" as an old and obsolete clamour, having no meaning, and portending no evil. A little opposition he regarded as a salutary thing, as calculated to impute the Ministers of the Established Church to a more rigid performance of their duty. If any one, indeed, attempted to preach up the rights of man, and insubordination to lawful authority, to silence such doctrines would be a work of necessity; but popery had nothing in it of that dangerous tendency, and might be met fairly in the field of argument.

These were the sentiments of all the friends and immediate followers of the late Mr. Burke, who, most acutely alive to all the dangers of jacobinism, could descry danger in nothing else. And, because the Catholic priests in France, and the Pope himself, had been persecuted, oppressed, and exiled, by the Jacobins, they conceived that the Romish religion had lost all its terrors, and had, as it were, suffered a political purification, which rendered it perfectly harmless. Engrossed by the contemplation of this one terror, they had lost sight of the cause of those dangers which threatened the civil and ecclesiastical establishments of this country with dissolution, at the close of the seventeenth century, and which had given birth to that revolution which placed the House

of Brunswick on the Throne. And, considering the question, as if there had been no alternative between Popery and Infidelity, they incessantly espoused the former as the only barrier against the latter. As this self-deception originated in a most laudable and honourable principle, it is impossible to speak of it with severity; but as it may lead to consequences highly perilous to a Protestant community, and, as it had already led to great political errors and evils in Ireland, it becomes necessary to mark it with sufficient force to render its nature clear and intelligible, and to put the nation on its guard against its dangerous tendency. It affords matter for surprize, that one very strong fact connected with this subject should have wholly escaped the observation of these strenuous anti-jacobins; namely, that all the jacobins in this country, and more especially in Ireland, were the loudest advocates in favour of the Catholics, and of the Catholic religion; and that jacobinical principles were most openly professed by those who took a leading part in the discussions, both in Parliament and elsewhere, and who supported all the resolutions and measures proposed for admitting the Papists to a full participation of political power. Surely the obvious deduction from these facts is, that Popery could form as close an alliance with jacobinism, as it could with arbitrary power. It is not less remarkable that, on the present occasion, none of those noisy patriots, who, at their tavern orgies, were perpetually declaiming in favour of the principles of the Revolution of 1688, which were essentially Anti-Popish, took the smallest part in the debate, with the exception of Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Erskine, the former of whom opposed, while the latter supported, the bill.

Other objections, stated by Mr. Windham, were more solid. He observed, that where no danger existed, no precaution was necessary; where there was no disease, no remedy was required. He complained of the readiness displayed by persons in calling for the interference of the House, which he considered as one of the evils of the times. The Courts below kept up their price. There were found no frivolous applications; the experiment was too costly. Parliament only was cheap. The legislature was as accessible as the Parish pump; it might be worked by the first man who put his hand to it. This alone appeared to him a suffi-

cient reason for putting a stop to the farther progress of a bill so nugatory and useless.

The bill, however, passed the House of Commons, after it had undergone various modifications, and after the insertion of one most objectionable clause, which was used as a strong argument against it in the Upper House. This clause went to empower the King, at his discretion, to license the admission of *any* person into a monastic or religious house, during the war. When the bill was carried to the Lords, it was strongly opposed by the Bishop of Rochester, Dr. Horsley, who, after contending for the perfect adequacy of the existing laws to the removal of the evil complained of, represented the bill as unconstitutional and dangerous, on account of the alarming power which it would place in the hands of the King. It enabled the King, (by the clause before noticed) to license the performance and observance of the rites and ordinances of monastic institutions, any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding. Now penance was a rite of the Romish church. Would his Majesty expose any of his subjects to corporal punishment?—Would the Lords allow the Pope's bulls to come again into England, and give the King a suspending power? The Bishop had no objection to that clause of the bill which required Catholic schoolmasters to make an annual return of their pupils; he thought such a regulation ought to be extended to all schools, particularly to those of Protestant dissenters, where the doctrines of jacobinism, sedition, and infidelity, were but too frequently inculcated to his certain knowledge. He was a sincere friend to the toleration of all Christians, of whatever sects. By CHRISTIANS he meant those who acted up to the thirty-nine Articles, the Confession of the Saxon churches, and those who conformed to the ancient discipline of the Protestant church, as settled at the Reformation;—not those who wanted to reform, to pull down the hierarchy, and appropriate to other uses the patrimony of the Church, *who denied the divinity of our Saviour*,* and wanted

* It is important here to remark, that the Bishop, most evidently, did not consider as *Christians* those *who denied the divinity of our Saviour*. The *Unitarians* expressly deny that divinity, yet do not scruple to associate for the promotion of what *they* call *Christian* knowledge!! The fact is, that none can be deemed Christians who do not believe in Christ, in

to get rid of the Athanasian Creed. In all such questions as the present, the grand consideration should be, *ne quid detrimenti Ecclesia Anglicana capiat.* There was great danger to be apprehended from what were called Charity and Sunday Schools, in, and about, the Metropolis. His Lordship concluded by moving to postpone the bill for three months. After some observations, in support of the bill, from the Bishop of Winchester, and others, in opposition to it, by the Chancellor, Loughborough, the Bishop of Rochester's motion was carried, and the bill consequently lost.

In the course of the Session Lord Auckland had brought forward, in the House of Peers, a subject of the greatest importance to the morals of the people, and, consequently, to the welfare of the State; the great prevalence of adultery, as exemplified in the multiplied applications for bills of divorce. The measure by which it was proposed to check the alarming increase of this evil was, by preventing the intermarriage of the adulterous parties after the bond of matrimony, in the first instance, had been dissolved by a Legislative Act. A similar bill had been introduced thirty years before, by the Duke of Athol, when it passed the Lords *unanimously,* but was negatived by the Commons; and a similar attempt, by the Bishop of Durham, in 1779, experienced a similar fate. Hitherto, then, the Lords had unanimously acknowledged the necessity of a measure which the Commons refused to adopt. — In the present instance, however, that unanimity did not appear. The bill was strongly and vehemently opposed, on a sound *pretext,* indeed, but by most wretched arguments. It was pretended that the proposed prohibition to marry would *increase* the sin of adultery! It would also shut out all possibility, on the part of the adultress, to return to *virtue*; and reduce her, in a manner, to the necessity of

the doctrines which he taught, and in the account which he gave of himself, and of his mission. It has always appeared to me to be a most extraordinary perversion of human intellect, in persons who consider the Redeemer of mankind as the promulgator of a perfect system of ethics, yet disbelieve the account which he himself gave of his divine nature; for, if there were real ground for their *disbelief,* as they, of course, suppose there is, Jesus Christ would be an impostor of the worst description, and, therefore, could not be entitled to respect, as the founder of a moral code.

leading a life of prostitution. By those who used these arguments, not more destructive of all moral principle, than repugnant to right reason and common sense, it seems to have been conceived that *virtue*, in such cases, consisted in the continued enjoyment of the fruits of sin; in the constant possession of that sensual reward, which had led the adultress to violate her marriage vow, to break through every maternal and conjugal tie, and to disobey a positive command of God. And, farther, that there was no alternative between such a connection and a life of prostitution. It never occurred to these *Men of the World*, that retirement, penitence, and prayer, were best adapted to restore a lost woman to peace of mind, and to the consolations of hope; to enable her to make the best reparation in her power for the past, and to open to her the most encouraging prospect for the future.—These vain Legislators never considered the controuling influence of example on female morals; the pernicious effect, on society, of holding up to the contemplation of the rising generation, a triumphant adultress, revelling in all the luxury of guilt, and obtaining not merely *pardon*, (which it is not for a Christian to withhold) but *protection, countenance,* and *support,* from a *liberal* world, without the observance of that indispensable condition prescribed by a Divine lawgiver,—*Repentance;* and for no other reason than that she had succeeded in making the partner of her sin, her partner for life!

The Duke of Clarence took an active part in opposition to the bill, and, in the course of a long speech, made an observation which it would ill-become the historian of the times to pass over without an appropriate comment.—He stated the Royal marriage act to be an act "in consequence of which *he could not marry*; it, indeed, placed *him* in the same situation in which the present bill would generally *place those who should unfortunately fall under its provisions.*"* Now the whole scope of the argument detailed in the printed speech, whence this passage is extracted, goes to establish the point,—that if the bill passed into a law, its inevitable effect would be to reduce divorced adultresses to the necessity of leading a life of prostitution; even a "*perpetual*

* *Substance of the Speeches of his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, in the House of Lords, April* 5, *May* 16, 21, *and* 23, 1800, *against the Divorce Bill.*

prostitution," was expressly stated to be the consequence of the bill. But I shall adopt the reflections of a contemporary writer on this remark, which are in perfect unison with my own.—" The analogy contended for, then, is, that the act alluded to absolutely prevents the marriage of the male members of the Royal Family, and reduces them to the necessity of living in a state of perpetual fornication. If such were really the effect of the act, it must meet with the unqualified reprobation of every good Christian, and ought instantly to be expunged from the Statute book. But the act of the 12th Geo. III. has no such sin to answer for. It only prohibits the marriage of the Royal Family without the previous consent of the King; nor is the prohibition even absolute, for where any one of the Royal Family, of the age of twenty-five, has given twelve months notice to the Privy Council of his intention to marry, he is at liberty to marry, unless, in the interval, both Houses of Parliament have expressly declared their disapprobation of the proposed connection. The fact, therefore, was misrepresented, and seems to have been intended only to supply an excuse for any of those illustrious personages, if any such there should ever unfortunately be, who, forgetting what they owed to their God, their country, and themselves, should be induced to lead a profligate and immoral life. But no such excuse can be found. If personages, so circumstanced, should ever feel the hardship of being unable to contract such marriages as their inclination might lead them to form; they should consider, first, the principle of the prohibition, the sacrifice of individual convenience to general good, deducing the wisdom and necessity of it from those melancholy pages of our history which exhibit the destructive consequences of the civil contentions which divided the rival Houses of York and Lancaster, and deluged the kingdom with blood; and, secondly, that from the situation which imposes such hardships adequate advantages arise; the comforts of affluence without exertion of body or mind; rank and dignity, without any previous effort to obtain them, and exclusive privileges without the necessity of personal qualifications; and, thirdly, they should recollect, that no human law whatever can afford an excuse for the violation of a divine precept."

The very weak, and most objectionable, arguments urged, in oppo-

sition to this salutary measure, were most ably confuted by Lords Auckland, Eldon, Hobart, and Grenville; and by the Bishops of London, Rochester, and Durham. And the bill, at length, passed the Upper House by a small majority. In the Lower House it was supported by Mr. Pitt, who considered its provisions as calculated, upon the whole, to produce a beneficial effect on society; but it was thrown out, on the report, by a majority of thirty-nine. Thus the Commons, for the third time, defeated the virtuous efforts of the Lords, and left a crime, which strikes at the root of all domestic happiness, scatters discord and misery over the social system, and shakes to the centre the whole fabric of civil society, to the sole correction of laws which experience had proved to be wholly inadequate to its suppression, or even to its prevention. The Parliament was prorogued on the twenty-ninth of July.

CHAPTER XLII.

Military operations on the Continent—Genoa surrenders to the Austrians—Buonaparté enters Italy—Drives the Austrians from Milan and Pavia—Unaccountable inactivity of the Austrian Commander, General Melas—Battle of Marengo—The French defeated on every side—Battle restored by a masterly manœuvre of General Desaix—Victory finally declares for the French—Impatience of the Austrian troops to attack the French the next morning—Disgraceful Convention concluded by Melas—Moreau enters Germany and overruns Saxony—An Armistice—Renewal of military operations in Germany—The Battle of Hohenlinden—Peace concluded at Luneville—By this treaty the French realize the projects of Brissot and Robespierre by extending their boundary to the Rhine—Affairs of Egypt—Treaty of El Arish—Kleber assassinated—He is succeeded in the command of the Army by Menou—State of Public Affairs at the close of the eighteenth century—View of Mr. Pitt's policy—Considerations on the probable state of the country had a different system of policy been pursued—The argument illustrated by a reference to the actual state of those powers who had procured peace with France—The origin of the war, its progress, and its partial failure, considered in relation to Mr. Pitt's conduct—Effect of the war upon England beneficial upon the whole—Scarcity of Corn—Reflections on its causes—War proved not to increase the price of Corn—Popular commotions in the Capital—Parliament convened—The King's Speech—Legislative measures adopted for averting the effects of scarcity—Wise principles of political economy entertained by Mr. Pitt—Mr. Tierney moves an inquiry into the State of the Nation—Motion rejected by one hundred and fifty-seven to thirty-seven—Principles avowed by the Northern powers—Incompatible with the maritime greatness and commercial interests of Great Britain—Contrary to the established Law of Nations—Meeting of the *Imperial* Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—New title assumed by the King—Reflections on the abandonment of the old title of *King of France*—Mr. Addington again elected Speaker of the House of Commons—Difference between the King and his Ministers on the Catholic Question—Mr. Pitt's former declaration on this subject referred to—Remarks on the *conditions* which Mr. Pitt had declared to be necessary for the adoption of the proposed measure—These conditions shewn not to exist—No pledge given by Mr. Pitt to the Irish Papists to bring forward the Question of giving them further indulgences—Mr. Dundas commissioned to open the matter to the King—Result of the conference—Examination of the arguments in favour of the Question—The Coronation Oath—The King complete master of the subject—Refuses to yield his conscience to the force of metaphysical subtleties—His Majesty resolutely objects to the proposal of his Ministers—Mr. Pitt a sincere friend to the Established Church—Remarks

on the new Test, which he meant to introduce as a substitute for the existing Test—Its efficacy denied—Mr. Pitt deceived as to the Catholic Question—Inefficacy of the proposed measure maintained—That measure at variance with the general principle of Mr. Pitt's policy—Probable cause of his conduct on this occasion—Reflections on the imputed change in the principles of modern Papists—Existence of such charge disproved by the pastoral letter of Dr. Troy—The fourth Council of Lateran imposes obligations on a Papist incompatible with his duty to a Protestant Government—The Papists of Ireland should have been called upon to renounce the principles contained in the decrees of that Council—Distinction drawn between *toleration* and *encouragement*—Mr. Pitt and his principal colleagues tender their resignation to the King; but offer to remain in place till a new Ministry is formed—The Imperial Parliament opened by the King—Speech from the Throne—Debate on the Address in the House of Commons—Speech of Mr. Grey—His sentiments incompatible with the principles of the Old Whigs—Ministers defended by Mr. Pitt—Address carried—Lord Grenville, in the House of Peers, avows the Catholic Question to be the cause of the change of the Ministry—Mr. Pitt opens the Budget—Takes a view of the prosperous state of the Country—New Ministry—Mr. Addington Premier—Mr. Pitt and his friends promise to support the new Ministers—General character of the new Administration—Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas explain their conduct in the House of Commons—Papers circulated among the Papists of Ireland by Lord Cornwallis—Animadversions on these papers—General remarks on the conduct of Mr. Pitt.

[1800.] After the unexpected discomfiture of the Russian army at the close of the last campaign, and the consequent triumph of the French arms in Switzerland, by which one main part of the campaign had been defeated, a total change took place in the command and disposition of the allied forces. The wayward disposition of the Russian Emperor, Paul, little inclined to listen to a calm investigation of facts, and easily led away by the hasty impulses of passion, had conceived an insuperable disgust at the unexpected disasters which had befallen his troops, in Switzerland and in Holland; and he, in consequence, recalled his whole army from the scene of action, and, instead of loading the conqueror of Italy with additional honours, he heaped insults on that venerable head which bowed beneath the weight of well-earned laurels, and left Suworrow, dejected and forlorn, to die of a broken-heart, the sad victim of injustice and ingratitude. The Archduke Charles, too, who gave fair promise of emulating the example of that renowned warrior, had, by the crooked policy, and ruinous influence, of the Aulic Council, which had controuled all his operations, and thwarted all his views, been deprived of the command of the Austrian troops. The

Austrians, in Germany, were now led by the veteran General, Kray; while Melas continued to command the imperial force employed in Italy. The first operation of any consequence, on the side of Italy, was the siege of Genoa, by the Austrians, who were assisted by an English squadron, under the command of Lord Keith. Massena defended the city. After a series of actions, in which many thousand lives were lost on both sides, Genoa surrendered to the Austrians on the fourth of June.

Meantime, Buonaparté collected a powerful army of reserve, in the plains of Burgundy, of which he took the command, about the middle of May. Having effected the passage of the Alps with little opposition, he entered the plains of Lombardy; and advancing, with rapidity, compelled the Austrians to evacuate Milan and Pavia. Crossing the Po, he attacked a body of Austrians at Montebello, and forced them to retire. Melas, whose inactivity was unaccountable, had neglected to oppose any adequate resistance to the inroads of the enemy, and was so badly informed of his movements, that he thought Buonaparté was at Dijon at the time when he was in Lombardy. Being, at last, however, awakened from his lethargy, he marched to encounter the victorious army. On the 16th of June, a general action took place, near the village of Marengo, which, during nine hours, raged with great fury. About four in the afternoon, the Austrians had completely driven in every division of the French, and were on the point of obtaining a complete victory. At this critical period, the French General, Desaix, who had been taken prisoner on his return from Egypt, and imprudently liberated in time to be present at this action, proposed to Buonaparté to point some pieces of artillery against a particular part of the Austrian column, which, in the pursuit, had been injudiciously weakened; and if he made the impression which he expected, he intended to improve the advantage by bringing up the reserve, under his own command. Buonaparté was, at this time, so confused at his discomfiture, and so enraged, that he had lost all presence of mind, and was incapable of giving any distinct orders. Desaix, then, was left to follow the dictates of his own judgment; he executed the proposed manœuvre; it was productive of the expected effect; he led on his division with great gallantry and

resolution, and turned the tide of victory in favour of the French. He fell, however, in the attempt. The battle lasted till the close of the day, when the French remained masters of the field. To the capture of the Austrian General, Zach, as he was hastening to give the necessary orders for repairing the confusion occasioned by the attack of Desaix, may the disastrous issue of this battle be principally ascribed. Still, the loss of the French was more considerable than that of the Austrians;—the former was stated, by accounts most to be relied on, to be from 12 to 14,000 men; while that of the latter did not exceed 9,000. The Austrian soldiers were so enraged at having victory thus wrested from their hands, that they were loud in their calls upon their commander, the next morning, to renew the contest. Instead of obeying this patriotic call, Melas concluded an armistice, and afterwards a convention, by which he consented to restore to the French all the fortresses which Suworrow had taken from them in the preceding campaign; thus abandoning, almost without a struggle, all the fruits of that warrior's victories!*

During these transactions in Italy, the French army, under Moreau, had entered Suabia, at the latter end of April, where it was opposed by General Kray. After various movements of little importance, they, at length, compelled the Austrians to retire, and, entering Bavaria, took possession of Munich, levied contributions on the Elector, and threatened the Hereditary States of the Emperor. Thus pressed, the Austrians deemed it expedient to consent to an armistice, which was concluded with Moreau, on the 14th of July. Count St. Julien was sent to Paris, by the Austrian Court, where he exceeded his powers by signing a separate treaty of peace with France, on the basis of the treaty of Campo Formio. This treaty the Emperor formally disavowed, and refused to

* I must, once more, express my surprize at the conduct of English writers, in adopting all the false accounts of the French Generals as true, even without stating them to be of French origin. The French, at the battle of Marengo, were superior in number to the Austrians, yet, in two works before noticed, the Annual Register for 1800, and Dr. Bisset's History of the present reign, the superiority of numbers is assigned to the Austrians, and the most extravagant and unfounded praises are lavished on Buonaparté, to whom the whole merit of the victory (such as it was!) is ascribed, when, in fact, he had lost the battle, which was only restored by the judicious conduct of Desaix.

conclude any treaty, unless England was included in it. At the beginning of September, a proposal was made, through Mr. Otto, the French Commissary, residing in London, to the British Ministers, for concluding a naval armistice, on which condition alone the First Consul would consent to prolong the armistice with Austria. A long correspondence took place on this subject, but it evidently appearing that the only object of Buonaparté was to obtain an opportunity of sending supplies to Malta and Alexandria, both of which were strictly blockaded by an English squadron; and, as a new armistice was, during the negotiation, concluded, with Austria, on condition of the surrender of the three important fortresses of Philipsburgh, Ulm, and Ingoldstadt, into the hands of the French, who thus secured an opening into the hereditary States of Austria, the proposal was ultimately rejected on the 9th of October.

This armistice terminated on the 29th of November, when Moreau resumed offensive operations. The Archduke John at first obtained a considerable advantage over the French; and he resolved to improve it by making a general attack on their lines, at Hohenlinden, on the third of December. But the elements proved more formidable to the Austrians than even the arms of the enemy. In consequence of a great snow, which fell on the morning of the attack, the central column of the army alone reached the destined point; while an opportunity was afforded to the French to send a division, between that column and the left wing, so as to fall on the rear of the column, at the very moment when it began the attack in front. Still, under this manifest disadvantage, the Austrians gallantly supported the unequal contest for several hours, and made the French pay dearly for the victory which accident and superiority of numbers had secured to them. The battle of Hohenlinden terminated the struggles of the Emperor for the recovery of those States which the enemy had wrested from him. He soon after sued for peace; and, on the ninth of February, 1801, signed the treaty of Luneville; by which France obtained a cession of all the German territories on the left bank of the Rhine, making that river, from the place where it leaves Switzerland to that where it enters Holland, the boundary of the new Republic; thus realizing the original projects of the first revolutionists. The acquisition of this territory destroyed one of the chief barriers

against the encroachments of France in the north of Europe. But, that no doubt might be left of the determination of France to overawe the empire, by the continual fear of hostile incursions into Germany, the restitution of Dusseldörf, Ehrenbreitstein, Philipsburgh, Cassel, Khel, and Brissac, on the right bank of the Rhine, were rendered of little value by a stipulation that they should remain in the same state in which they were at the moment of their evacuation, that is, in ruins. France, therefore, retained the power of interposition in the affairs of Germany, by the right which she had reserved to herself by this treaty, to settle the indemnities to be secured to the German Princes, who were proprietors of the territory ceded to her, on the left bank of the Rhine; and by her ability, in consequence of these cessions, to make sudden irruptions into the heart of the hereditary States of Austria. Istria, Dalmatia, and the Venetian Isles in the Adriatic, were secured to Austria, together with Venice, the Bocca di Cattaro, the canals and the country included between the hereditary States of Austria, the Adriatic Sea, and the Adige from the Tyrol to the mouth of that Sea;—the towing-path of the Adige to form the line of limitation. France took to herself, and for her vassal, the Italian Republic, or kingdom, as it was soon destined to be, the dominions of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Modenese, whose sovereigns were to be indemnified for the territory, thus iniquitously wrested from them, by other territories to be wrested, in a manner equally iniquitous, from the Sovereign Princes of Germany.

While France was thus employed in the execution of her ambitious plans, for humiliating her ancient rival, and for acquiring the ability to dictate laws to the continent, the Naval force of Great Britain had been engaged in harassing the coasts of the enemy, blockading his ports, and intercepting his supplies. In August, an expedition was fitted out, under the command of Sir James Murray Pulteney, and Sir John Borlase Warren, whose first destination was against the Spanish port of Ferrol. After the troops were landed, however, the place was found too strong to be attacked with any prospect of success, and the attempt was, therefore, relinquished. A more formidable force, both naval and military, was sent against Cadiz, under Lord Keith and Sir Ralph Abercrombie, but, as a pestilent disorder raged in the city, daily destroying numbers of

the inhabitants, as it was, nevertheless, capable of making a long resistance, and, as the army had another and more important object in view, the destruction of the French in Egypt, this expedition was also abandoned. A body of troops had been previously sent, under Major-General Pigot, to Malta, which surrendered to the English, on the 15th of September. Here, and at Minorca, the greater part of the force destined for the attack upon Egypt was stationed, till the necessary preparations for that purpose were completed. In the West Indies, the Dutch settlement of Curacao was taken possession of by a British force, as was also the factory of Goree, on the coast of Africa.

After Buonaparte's flight from Egypt, Kleber entered into a convention, at El Arish, with the commander of the Turkish forces, by which he agreed to evacuate that country, and to return, with his troops, to Europe.—And this convention having been referred to Sir Sidney Smith, by the Turks, it received his sanction; it was signed on the 24th of January, 1801. As soon, however, as the British Cabinet were apprized of the fact, without being informed that Sir Sidney Smith had any share in the transaction, they wisely considered that it would be highly impolitic and improper, to suffer such a French force to arrive in Europe, to reinforce the armies acting against their Ally, in Italy or Germany; and, accordingly, sent instructions to Lord Keith, the commander of the British fleet, in the Mediterranean, to prevent the execution of it, by capturing the troops, on their departure from Alexandria. These instructions were communicated to Kleber by the Admiral, when that general apprized the Turks, that there was an end to the convention; after which hostilities were renewed, and some advantages were gained by the French.

The moment, however, that Ministers received certain information, that the treaty of El Arish had received the sanction of a British officer, although he was wholly unauthorized to act in a diplomatic character, at that time, and, consequently, had no power to sign such an instrument, they rather chose to risk all the inconvenience, which might result from the presence of Kleber's army in Europe, than to subject the national character even to an unfounded imputation of a breach of faith, and

sent counter-instructions to Lord Keith, authorizing him to fulfil the terms of the treaty, and to suffer the French to pass unmolested. While a negotiation was opened with Kleber, pursuant to these instructions, that General was assassinated at Cairo, by a Turkish emissary, (on the 14th of January, 1801,) when the command of the French army devolved on Menou, who had publicly professed the Mahometan faith, and added to his own name that of Abdallah.

The close of the eighteenth century was marked by circumstances of a gloomy and a discouraging nature to England. All her plans for humbling the pride, curbing the ambition, and curtailing the power, of her implacable enemy, had completely failed; France had reduced the Continent of Europe to that situation which enabled her, almost without the fear of opposition, to parcel out its various states at her pleasure, for the purpose either of dispossessing those who viewed her with a jealous eye, or of rewarding others who were obsequious to her will. A very large portion of the territory included between the Texel and the Bay of Naples, was occupied by her tributaries and vassals, or by princes who trembled at her frown, and held their tottering power by the frail tenure of her ruler's will. Prussia, indeed, and Russia, had not yet bent beneath the weight of her arms, nor sunk before the machinations of her intriguing spirit. But the Emperor Paul, forsaking his alliance with England, had become her enemy, and the Prussian Monarch, who had, for some time, held the scale of victory in his hands, and might have made it preponderate against France, had he so chosen, with a contempt of all regard for the security of his own Throne, and with a degree of folly scarcely to be conceived, indulged his ancient jealousy of the House of Austria, contemplated her humiliation with pleasure, passively looked on while France was trampling, with ferocious disdain, on [redacted]he settled institutions of surrounding states, vainly imagining, that [redacted] possessed the ability to stop her wild career, whenever her efforts should be directed against himself, and, more effectually to favour her views, joined a hostile confederacy of the Northern powers, which, at the instigation of Paul, had been recently formed against England.

But this state of things, though confidently asserted, by the Oppo-

nents of Mr. Pitt, to be the natural result of his improvident measures, could not fairly be imputed to any disasters which it was in the power of the British Minister to prevent; nor to any chain of circumstances over which he had any controul. Had the sentiments of the Opposition been suffered to influence the conduct of the Cabinet, at the beginning of the year 1793, is it to be credited, that France would have remained quiet within her own boundaries, and have imposed a curb on that insatiate spirit of revolution and conquest which she had openly renounced, but invariably displayed?—Had the insidious explanations of Chauvelin, and his new masters, been admitted as satisfactory by Mr. Pitt, though demonstrated to be delusive and false, by the Members of the Executive Council of France themselves; would such admission have prevented the completion of a plan long formed for the invasion of Holland, (a plan which constituted an essential part of the revolutionary system,) by the army of Dumouriez? Fortunately for the cause of truth, and for the satisfaction of posterity, the most incontrovertible documents have been supplied, by the French themselves, to prove, beyond the possibility of cavil, that, let the conduct of England have been what it would, they would have pursued, without scruple, their ambitious course, and have employed their arms, and their principles, for the subversion and ruin of the neighbouring powers. War, they declared to be necessary for the destruction of their own monarchy, and for the establishment of their Republic. It could not, then, have been avoided by us, without an absolute departure from the sage policy of our ancestors, from the system invariably pursued by our greatest Statesmen, and our wisest Monarchs; and without submitting to the degradation of abandoning, to the mercy of France, those allies, whom we were bound, equally by interest and by treaty, to protect against her attacks. We might, indeed, by a sacrifice of [redacted] character, and by a total disregard of the best interests of the [redacted], have folded our arms, and looked patiently and passively on, like the King of Prussia, while France was extending her empire from the North to the South of Europe; from the Zuyder-zee to the Adriatic; while she subdued her allies, annexed the territories of surrounding powers to her own, and left us without a friend on the Continent. But, by thus basely descending from the high station which we had hitherto held in the scale of European powers, would the interests

of the nation have been promoted;—would her commerce have been increased;—would her strength have been augmented?—No, the commerce of France would have superseded the commerce of England; France would have monopolized the Trade of Europe; her fleets would have dictated laws to all the maritime powers; and her prohibitory decrees would have deprived us of all the Continental markets.—Emboldened by our cowardice, presuming on our inactivity, she would have adopted every measure for counteracting our influence in the affairs of Europe, and, in exact proportion as her means of annoyance would have been extended, by the uninterrupted exercise of her revolutionary power, would our means of offence and defence have been contracted. Nor is it to be supposed that our acquiescence would have appeased her enmity. If we cast our eyes on the fate of those powers, who not only observed the strictest neutrality, but who rendered her the most signal services, at the time of her greatest need, we shall see, that the reward of their *prudence*, their *courtesy*, their *forbearance*, and their *friendship*, was the subversion of their governments, the plunder of their property, and the destruction of their liberties. And, on what ground could England, the constant rival, and frequent enemy, of France, the only state which had ever imposed effective restraints on her ambition, who had often checked the progress of her arms, who had constantly defeated her fleets, and who was her successful competitor for pre-eminence in political and commercial consequence; England, in short, who was at once envied, hated, and dreaded, by France; on what ground could she expect to experience from the conquerors of Europe, and the tyrants of the Continent, more indulgent treatment, and a better fate, than Switzerland, Tuscany, Venice, Prussia, or Spain?

Had England been able, with diminished resources, humbled spirit,—for humbled must the spirit of Englishmen have been, at remaining passive spectators of the ruin of Europe, at contemplating the triumph of her natural enemy;—still to defend herself against the undivided forces of France, strengthened, as they would have been, by the united navies of all the maritime powers of the Continent, she would, at least, have had to sustain a conflict more terrible, and more ruinous, than the lengthened war, which the support of her national character,

a sense of national security, and a regard for the obligation of treaties, induced her to wage. Sunk, and lost, in the estimation of Europe, the very source of national honour destroyed, with crippled commerce, and curtailed resources, had she fallen in such a struggle, she would have fallen unlamented and despised; and, even had she ultimately succeeded, in the unequal contest so far as to preserve her territory entire, she would have only survived the wrecks, to become the contempt of Europe.

In this view of the subject, the danger, arising from the *principles* of the French Republic, has been kept entirely out of sight, from a conviction that the conclusion which has been drawn is sufficiently solid without such a support. But, independently of the facts which have been stated, and of the arguments which have been used, it is contended that, if the war had not taken place, the free intercourse which would have continued between the two countries would have afforded such an opportunity to the French Jacobins to diffuse their abominable tenets in this kingdom, that a rebellion would, in all human probability, have ensued. Indeed, considering the various attempts to excite a spirit of disaffection in the country, and to stimulate the people to take up arms against the government, which, without this intercourse, were actually made, there can be very little reason to doubt that, had the intercourse subsisted, an active rebellion would have taken place, and, possibly, the Constitution, that sacred treasure which Englishmen have received from their forefathers, and which they justly regard as the greatest blessing which free subjects can enjoy, might have been destroyed by the unhallowed hands of furious demagogues, actuated by a blind zeal; but trained to desolation and murder, by the sage philosophers of republican France. If, then, the ideas here advanced are just, on this important question, the war saved the nation from all the horrors of a revolution, or, at least, from all the miseries of a civil war; and England is indebted to it for the preservation of her matchless constitution, and of all the comforts and enjoyments of civil liberty and of social life.

It is clear, therefore, if these premises be admitted, first, that the

war could not have been avoided without the loss of national character, if it could have been avoided at all;—and secondly, that, notwithstanding the burdens which it imposed, and the disappointments with which it was too frequently marked, it was, on the whole, most beneficial in its effects to England. It would only, then, remain to be considered, whether the failure to accomplish the great object of reducing the power of France, and of crushing the hydra of jacobinism on the continent, was imputable to the misconduct of the Minister. And, in order to come to a right decision, on this branch of the question, it should be first ascertained, whether it arose from causes which this country could controul, or from the conduct of other powers, who settled their own plan of operations, and followed their own system of policy. The principal causes of this failure were, the secession of the King of Prussia from the grand confederacy, and his subsequent neutrality;—the corruption of the Austrian officers, in the first campaign in Italy; the mistaken tactics of the Austrian Generals; and the misconduct of the Aulic Council, in controuling the operations of the Archduke Charles, and in acting in violation of the plan of proceeding, settled by the allies;—and, lastly, the caprice of the Russian Emperor, in withdrawing his troops, and in leaving Austria to fight her battles alone. Not one of these measures depended upon the will of Mr. Pitt, who exerted himself to the utmost to prevent their adoption. Whatever Great Britain could contribute to the support of the common cause, in men, money, or other implements of war, were liberally granted, promptly provided, and faithfully applied. In the sole instance, perhaps, of Holland, more might have been done, by timely exertion, and the employment of a more considerable force, than actually was done. Still, however, the Ministers were not responsible for the disgraceful termination of that expedition, which was an act not of necessity, but of choice, in the commander.

Mr. Pitt, then, had nothing to reproach himself with, respecting the gloomy aspect of public affairs at the close of the century. The prospect was rendered still more dismal, by another occurrence, over which the Minister had no more controul, than he had over the operations and politics of the continental powers;—the scarcity of corn, the causes of

which had been grossly misrepresented, had excited a considerable degree of popular discontent and clamour. A serious disposition to tumult and riot, became manifest in the metropolis, in the autumn of 1800, but although, by the indecisive conduct of the Lord Mayor, it was suffered to disgrace the country for several days, the active exertions of the magistracy, and the volunteers, finally repressed the growing spirit of outrage, and restored the capital to a state of tranquillity.

Some of the most judicious writers on political economy have been enabled to ascertain, with as much accuracy as such calculations will admit of, that the best crops of grain which are produced in the most favourable seasons will not yield more than a sufficient supply for the consumption of the country for fifteen months; and that the worst seasons seldom produce more than sufficient for six months. On the present occasion, there had been two bad crops successively; that of 1799 being almost the worst ever known; and that of 1800 being one-fourth below an average crop. It is easy to perceive, that this circumstance alone was sufficient to account for the scarcity and dearness of corn, without having recourse to the practice of monopoly and forstalling. Not but that there was some reason to believe that the evil was, in a small degree perhaps, aggravated by the avarice of interested speculators, who, thinking to profit by the public calamity, accumulated considerable quantities of grain, much of which was spoiled, and thrown into the river.

The best means of providing a remedy for this alarming evil, was the adoption of rigid economy in the consumption of bread, and the substitution of other nutritious food, more easily obtained. By these precautions, and by acts of charity, unexampled in extent, and in propriety of application, the worst effects of the scarcity were averted, and much of the distress, arising from the dearness of provisions, alleviated if not removed. But, it was a mortifying circumstance to observe the apathy, and, in some instances, the discontent, with which the bounty exercised towards the poorer classes of society was received. It was, indeed, rather claimed as a right than accepted as a favour; and the strange and preposterous notion was entertained, that, in a season of

public calamity, occasioned by the visitations of Providence, the poor are to be exempted from all the inconveniences to which the rest of the community are subjected.

It has been already observed, that some violent partisans, both in Parliament and elsewhere, ascribed the dearness, occasioned by the scarcity, to the *war*, and inferred that the only effective remedy was *peace*. Now so little solid foundation for this inference was there, that a very acute writer on political economy has demonstrated, by a table of the prices of corn, from the year 1688 to the end of the year 1792, that the average price of wheat, in all the years of war, during that period, was 2*l*. 2*s*. 11*d*. per quarter, and the average price, in the years of peace, 2*l*. 5*s*. 3*d*. per quarter. So that, upon an average of one hundred and five years, the price of wheat, in times of war, was less than in times of peace, and that at a rate of 5*l*. 8*s*. 8½*d*. per cent. And the result of a very elaborate investigation of the subject was, that "*the effect of war is to reduce the price of wheat;* and, it is probable, that of all the prime necessaries of life, which are not directly taxed."*

But the effect produced by the wide diffusion of false notions on this

* *A determination of the average depression of the price of wheat in war, below that of the preceding peace; and of its re-advance in the following; according to its yearly rates, from the revolution to the end of the last peace; with remarks on their greater variations in that entire period.* By J. Brand, C. L. M. A. &c. &c. 1800. In this able tract, written for the laudable purpose of exposing the falsehoods of those who, from factious motives, had laboured to persuade the people that all the distress which they experienced from the extraordinary rise in the price of provisions was, exclusively, imputable to the war, "The circumstances of these times," says the judicious author—"in which we are attacked by foreign war, and by sedition at home, render this an error pregnant with the worst of dangers; the populace will yield a ready ear to the demagogue or agitator who is able to persuade them, that he is possessed of a cure for any sufferings they may labour under; and this kingdom never contained in it such an army of enemies of this description. The calamities of adverse seasons, they persuade the uninformed class to be the guilt of their governors, and that they themselves are their only true protectors, the only persons attentive to their interests, which can be secured solely by embracing their measures. The ruin which the diffusion of such a belief may bring upon us needs not to be enlarged on: in this state of suffering of the poor, the seeds of commotion are widely sown; and the eruption of a single riot may be the commencement of a formidable insurrection; and that the signal of more."

interesting subject, by a jacobin faction, who sought to convert the distresses with which it had pleased Providence to afflict the country, into the means for its destruction, and who had endeavoured, and in some instances successfully, to stimulate the lower orders, by a sense of their sufferings, to riot, insurrection, and rebellion, rendered it necessary to convene the Parliament sooner than was intended, for the express purpose of taking this matter into serious consideration, with a view, as well to the adoption of the best remedies of which the case would admit, as to the conveyance of a right understanding of the causes of the existing evil. Parliament, accordingly, met on the 11th of November, when the King in his speech from the Throne, immediately called their attention to the object which most interested his feelings, and most affected the community; he earnestly conjured them to adopt all such measures as might, upon full consideration, appear best calculated to alleviate the severe pressure now experienced, and to prevent the danger of its recurrence by promoting, as far as possible, the permanent extension and improvement of agriculture. The general remedies more particularly recommended were economy in consumption, and encouragement of importation. Alluding to the complaint which had been publicly made of unfair practices in trade for increasing the price of provisions, his Majesty censured, on the one hand, all such practices should they be found to exist, and deprecated, on the other, the adoption of hasty prejudices, to which, it was possible, the complaints in question might be referred. "If it should appear," he said, "that the evil necessarily arising from unfavourable seasons has been increased by any undue combinations, or fraudulent practices, for the sake of adding unfairly to the price, you will feel an earnest desire of effectually preventing such abuses; but you will, I am sure, be careful to distinguish any practices of this nature from that regular and long-established course of trade, which experience has shewn to be indispensable, in the present state of society, for the supply of the markets, and for the subsistence of my people." The King justly censured the disturbances which had occurred, in various parts of the kingdom, which he truly described as resulting from the acts of malicious and disaffected persons, and as calculated to increase the evil which they professed to remedy; and he paid a just tribute of praise to the conduct

of the volunteers, whose active efforts had contributed much to the repression of these outrages.

Mr. Pitt, in supporting the address, in the Commons, which went merely to thank the King for his communication, and to pledge the House to take the subject, recommended to their notice, into immediate consideration, strongly deprecated the introduction of party politics into a question of this nature; and he displayed notions of political economy not less correct than those which he manifested on matters of legislation and government. Having proposed that the House should resolve itself into a committee, for the purpose of encouraging importation by bounties, which he conceived to be the most judicious and most effective remedy that could be adopted, and which measure had the advantage over every speculative project, by the experience which had been had of its efficacy during the two last years, he added, "let investigation be pursued; let remedies be suggested: the House will hear with impartiality, and decide upon conviction. I do not hesitate, at the same time, to declare, that, to go beyond the remedy which is plain, practical, sanctioned by the soundest principles, and confirmed by the surest experience, must ever be a dangerous course; it is unsafe in the attempt, it is unworthy of a statesman in the design, to abandon the system which practice has explained, and experience has strengthened, for the visionary advantages of a crude, untried theory. It is no less unsafe, no less unworthy, of the active politician, to adhere to any theory, however just in its general principle, which excludes from its view those particular details, those unexpected situations, which must render the scheme of the philosophic politician in the closet inapplicable to the actual circumstances of human affairs. But, if it be unwise to be guided solely by speculative systems of political economy, surely it is something worse to draw theories of regulation from clamour and alarm. If we ought not to bend observation and experience to any theory, surely we ought much less to make just principles and tried causes yield to unwise projects, struck out from temporary distress, the offspring not of argument, but of fear; not of inquiry, but of passion; not of cool reflection, but of inflamed prejudice. No man, therefore, who duly considered the causes from which the prosperity

of the country had arisen, who well understood the foundation on which it stood, could think, for a moment, that to redress any supposed mischief, which, in times of peculiar scarcity and distress, monopoly might be supposed to have occasioned, it would be right to strike at the freedom of trade, and the application of industry and capital; to do so would be to bring us back to something worse than the system that prevailed five hundred years ago; inasmuch as the state of the country, the distribution of property, and the employment of industry, were so infinitely different from that which obtained at that period. Indeed, nothing could be more absurd than to suppose that such a scheme, even though suited to the æra from which it is derived, could be applicable to the new interests and demands of another state of society."

It was by this wise policy of rendering general principles subservient to practical benefits, by not wantonly departing from them, on the one hand, and by not pertinaciously adhering to them, on the other, according as the prosperity of the nation, and the good of the community, would be best promoted, that the public conduct of Mr. Pitt was invariably regulated. In fact, he was not a speculative, but a practical, politician. He made the sum of general good, to be obtained by any measure, the criterion by which he was guided in its adoption or rejection. He regarded theory as useful only in the direction of practice. He framed no speculative code to be consulted upon every emergency, but adapted his acts to the circumstances which immediately called for them.

It is needless to repeat his arguments on the imputed effect of the war, in producing the existing scarcity, or the rise in the price of provisions, after what has been stated on that subject. It will suffice to state one plain decisive fact: in the years 1794 and 1795 the price of corn was very high, whereas, at a later period of the war, when, of course, any effect which it might produce on the price of corn would be increased, that is, from Michaelmas, 1796, to Midsummer, 1799, the price sunk below that which, in the present state of things, could afford a fair profit to the farmer, the average not exceeding 48s. 6d. per quarter.

The House formed itself into a general Committee, as proposed by Mr. Pitt, and adopted the following resolutions and bounties: That the average price of foreign corn in London should be published weekly in the Gazette, that on every quarter of imported wheat, weighing 424 pounds, a bounty should be given equal to the sum, by which the average price published in the Gazette, in the third week after its importation, should be less than five pounds per quarter. On every quarter of barley, weighing 352 pounds, a bounty rendering its price equal to fifty shillings. On every quarter of rye, weighing 408 pounds, a bounty rendering its price equal to sixty-three shillings. On every quarter of oats, weighing 196 pounds, a bounty making the price seventy shillings. On every barrel of fine wheaten flour, weighing 196 pounds, sold by auction, a bounty equal to sixty-eight, seventy-eight, eighty, eighty-eight, and ninety shillings, according to the period of its importation. On every hundred weight of rice from India, a bounty, making the price equal to thirty-two shillings; and, if from America, equal to thirty-five shillings. The reason assigned for this difference was, that rice from India, although brought from a greater distance, is purchased originally at a much lower price; but, by a subsequent resolution, the bounties rendered them equal. On every quarter of peas, a bounty equal to seventy-five shillings; and on every quarter of beans, a bounty equal to fifty shillings.

The Committees of the two Houses afterwards published Reports, on the means, chiefly, of alleviating the present evil, replete with judicious remarks, and wholesome regulations; and no measure, which wisdom could suggest, was omitted to remove the weight of the pressure from the labouring classes of the community. On a subject so interesting to every individual, it cannot be deemed superfluous to state the result of the researches of the intelligent writer, whose opinions have been already cited, respecting the causes of scarcity, in the article of corn, in this country. After shewing that, from the year 1765, we had a great export trade in corn, but that, since the year 1771, a constant import had been necessary for our supply, Mr. Brand proceeds to make the following observations:—

" Two causes may be assigned for this; the first of which shall be barely stated, without entering into any discussion upon it. Although the number of the inhabitants of the villages be increased, together with their skill in agriculture, whereby its product is considerably augmented; yet it appears evident, that our manufactures, and manufacturers, who are here to be taken as only consumers thereof, have increased with greater celerity;—thus the product of the country is not so great as formerly, in proportion to the number of persons to subsist upon it.

" The second is,—that a greater consumption of wheat has taken place, by equal numbers of the lower class, in the latter period, than the former. This may be shewn to be in the highest degree probable, from the prices of the table at the end of the war of 1740. For, from the beginning of, to the end of, that term, which considerably exceeded half a century, some advance, and that not inconsiderable, was made in the wages of artizans and labourers in husbandry. But if, contrary to all testimony, and the reason of the thing, we suppose them to have, for that term, remained fixed, the effect of this long fall of prices would be the same in kind, but inferior in degree only.

" While the price of the grain, reputed the best for bread, was decreasing in every period, and the weekly income of the lower class, who had before very much subsisted on substitutes for it, was increasing, or even remained fixed, it is natural to suppose that they would desert the use of the latter, or, at least, greatly diminish it, and indulge themselves in that of the former in its stead. At the conclusion of the last, and the beginning of the present, century, a mixture of rye or barley with wheat was very common in the bread of the lower class; the former was called maslin. Houghton, in his collection, on trade and husbandry,* informs us, that barley-bread was in such general use in some parts of England, that of seventeen quarters of corn ground weekly, at a mill in one parish, in Buckinghamshire, sixteen were of barley; and, in Wales, that a bread had been long in use, made of equal

* " Vol. I. No. 90, April 20, 1764."

weights of wheat-meal and of boiled turnips, the juice being pressed out of them. That bread entirely of wheat was not much eaten by the poor, may be also inferred from what he says of that which was made out of wheat-meal, with the coarse bran sifted out. "This sort," he informs us, "is chiefly in the country, *among able folk, that do value good bread.*"

"But the principal grain used in making bread, together with wheat, or by itself, was rye. In the year 1688, Mr. King computed the quantity of wheat grain, for consumption, at fourteen millions of bushels, and of rye at ten millions.* Thus taking the consumption to have been as the product, the wheat was only $\frac{583}{1000}$ of the bread-corn consumed; but, previous to the year 1772, the author of the Political Essays on the British Empire informs us, that the consumption of wheat had increased to 3,840,000, while that of rye had been diminished to 1,039,000 quarters,† therefore the consumption of wheat was now become $\frac{788}{1000}$ of the whole of our bread-corn; or the average consumption of wheat per head was now increased in the proportion of 788 to 583; or that of four to three nearly. This circumstance, joined to the relative increase of our artizans and manufacturers, has chiefly contributed to change our export trade of wheat into an import. The use of inferior corns in bread is now confined to a narrow district; notoriously encroached upon, and diminishing, by the borderers falling into the entire use of wheat.

"The state of the labourer, in every department, must have been extremely easy in the first of the terms, that of the fall of prices ending in the war of 1740. This brought an augmentation of their indulgences, in the use of wheat for rye; which, becoming customary in certain parts of the kingdom, now became to be reputed, at least, as a necessary. This was not the only one of which they contracted such fixed habits, that it became such; others might be mentioned. When the

* "Whitworth's Davenant, Vol. II. p. 216."

† "P. 97, 98. Account of wheat from the three tracts on the corn trade, that of rye probably from the same writer.

price of wheat and other commodities began to rise greatly, great additions in the poor's rate took place on these two accounts jointly."

In a note, the author proves that an increase of taxes does not tend to produce any augmentation in the price of wheat. This is illustrated by a reference to the system of increased taxation, which took place about the time of the revolution; and, in spite of which, the price of wheat fell for more than half a century. All those public men who had adopted false notions, on this subject, and indulged themselves in a train of sophistical reasoning, and fanciful speculations, and in assigning imaginary causes, would do well to refer to those sources of authentic information, of sound argument, and of solid facts, which experience and history supply. A subject, which affects the subsistence of a great nation, is not to be investigated with the spirit which marks mere party discussions, with the levity of wit, the confidence of assertion, or the malignity of invective. It demands, in a peculiar manner, calm inquiry, patient research, and dispassionate judgment.

During this inquiry, and the ferment which the scarcity produced, Mr. Tierney moved, on the twenty-seventh of November, for an inquiry into the state of the nation; a motion to which the Members of the Opposition had frequent recourse, as the best means of vilifying his Majesty's Ministers, of extolling their own patriotism, and of inflaming the minds of the people. Mr. Tierney, in the speech with which he prefaced his motion, entered upon all those topics which had been so often discussed during the war, and repeated all the arguments which had been so often brought forward by the Opposition. He was answered, at great length, by Mr. Pitt, who undertook the task of vindicating the Ministers from the aspersions of their opponents. The motion for the inquiry was negatived by one hundred and fifty-seven votes against thirty-seven.

[1801.] Such was the state of public affairs at the opening of the nineteenth century; and, to render the prospect more gloomy, the hostile confederacy of the Northern powers, which has been alluded to, had acquired a degree of consistency which threatened materially to affect the commercial and political interests of the kingdom. The principles

established by this compact were:—1. "Every ship may freely navigate from one harbour to another, and on the coasts of the Belligerent nations.

2. "The effects which belong to the subjects of the Belligerent powers in neutral ships, with the exception of contraband goods, shall be free.

3. "In order to determine what shall be considered as a blockaded harbour, such denomination shall be admitted to apply only where the disposition and number of the ships of the power by which it is invested shall be such as to render it apparently hazardous to enter; and that every ship which shall go into a blockaded harbour, that is evidently so blockaded, violates the present convention as much as if the commander of the blockade had previously advised it of the state of the harbour, and it had nevertheless endeavoured, by force or artifice, to obtain admission.

4. "With regard to neutral ships, except those which for just reasons, and upon evident grounds, shall be detained, sentence shall be pronounced without delay; the proceedings against them shall be uniform, prompt, and lawful, over and above the indemnity to which they shall be entitled for the damage they have sustained, complete satisfaction shall be given for the insult committed against the flag of their Majesties.

5. "The declaration of the officers who shall command the ship of war, of the King or Emperor, which shall be convoying one or more merchant's ships, that the convoy has no contraband goods on board, shall be sufficient; and that no search of his ship, or the other ships of the convoy, shall be permitted. And the better to insure respect to those principles, and the stipulations founded upon them, which their disinterested wishes to preserve the imprescriptible rights of the neutral nations have suggested, the high contracting parties, to prove their sincerity and justice, will give the strictest orders to their captains, as well of their ships of war, as of their merchant ships, to load no part of

their ships, or secretly to have on board any articles, which, by virtue of the present convention, may be considered as contraband; and, for the more completely carrying into execution this command, they will respectively take care to give directions to their Courts of Admiralty to publish it whenever they shall think it necessary, and to this end the regulation, which shall contain this prohibition, under several penalties, shall be printed at the end of the present act, that no one may plead ignorance."

These principles had been adopted and acted upon by Denmark and Sweden;—the right of search had been actively resisted; and all the communications which had taken place between Great Britain and the Northern powers only seemed to demonstrate the firm resolution of the latter to persist in a line of conduct which must reduce this country to the necessity of either degrading herself in the eyes of Europe, by submitting to a wanton violation of her acknowledged rights, or of resisting the assertion of those hostile principles by arms. The Emperor of Russia had carried his violence still farther, by imposing an embargo on all British ships in his ports, and by the sequestration of all British property.

This confederacy, aiming a deadly blow at the maritime power of Great Britain, at a period of severe pressure, when forsaken by her continental allies, and threatened with famine at home, was a counterpart of the memorable *armed neutrality* of 1780, which had the same object in view. An acquiescence in such claims, which went the length of maintaining the right of a neutral power, however insignificant, to carry on, in time of war, the trade of a belligerent power, and to supply her with whatever was necessary for the support of the contest in which she was engaged, would have been equally dangerous and dishonourable. For, if the principle were once admitted, that free bottoms made free goods, and that no merchantmen could be subjected to search which were under the protection of a ship of war, a Danish or a Swedish frigate might cover the whole foreign and country trade of France, and exempt her from the expence of insurance, and the risk of capture. It was a claim which took from maritime superiority all its lawful

advantages, and sheltered weakness beneath the flag of fraud. It contravened all the principles which, for a century, had regulated the conduct of naval powers; and which England, in particular, had always proclaimed, supported, and enforced. It struck, indeed, at the very source of our prosperity, and could not be submitted to without a sacrifice, which must be speedily followed by the loss of our national wealth, greatness, and independence. It was, therefore, resolved by Mr. Pitt to resist this cowardly combination of Northern dictators, to the utmost of our power, and at all hazards; and, every attempt at procuring redress by negotiation having failed, the most active preparations were made to extort it by arms.

The first day of the year 1801 was the period fixed for the legislative Union between the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland to be carried into effect. And, as the King's title must, of necessity, undergo an appropriate alteration, the opportunity was taken, by Ministers, to omit that part of it, which had been the boast and pride of successive generations, by bringing to their recollection the heroic achievements of their ancestors. Henceforth, it was determined, that a British Monarch should not be called "KING OF FRANCE." They who considered this sacrifice as of no importance are little acquainted with the best feelings of human nature, have no notion of some of the finest springs of genuine patriotism, and have a very imperfect sense of that laudable *pride* which is the legitimate parent of national greatness. To remove any one stimulus to the performance of great actions is highly impolitic; and to strip the wings of royalty of one of its brightest feathers, at a moment when jacobinism was daily extending her empire on the ruins of subverted thrones and demolished altars, was to crown the triumph of criminal usurpation, and to establish a principle of concession, neither unimportant in itself, nor innocuous in its consequences. The motive to this sacrifice was the demand made by the republican plenipotentiaries, during the negotiations at Lille; and Ministers, having no doubt of its renewal, whenever any fresh negotiation should be opened, thought it more prudent to resign the title spontaneously, when no negotiation was on foot, than to wound the national honour by yielding it to the importunate claims of an insolent enemy. Certainly there was

not enough of national spirit, in the people of England, at this period, to support a Minister in the resistance of such a claim; but there was an ample sufficiency of disaffection to raise a national clamour at any attempt to make such resistance the means of preventing, or even of retarding, a treaty of peace. Under these circumstances, the Minister might possibly be justified for performing, in the least obnoxious and objectionable way, an act, which, he felt, must be performed, in some way or other. And the people have to thank themselves for the disgrace which attached to this loss of honour which reflected its lustre from the crown upon themselves.

The title which his Majesty now assumed was, in Latin, *Georgius tertius, Dei Gratiâ, Britanniarum, Rex, fidei defensor;* and, in English, "GEORGE THE THIRD, BY THE GRACE OF GOD OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, KING, DEFENDER OF THE FAITH." The arms and flags of the United Kingdom also underwent suitable alterations; a new great seal was made, and appropriate changes were directed to be introduced into the book of common prayer, and the forms of ordination and consecration. The members of the Privy Council of Great Britain renewed their oaths; an extensive promotion, in the army and navy, took place; and some of the Irish nobility were advanced to the dignity of Peers of the United Kingdom. Parliament was no longer called the Parliament of Great Britain, but the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or sometimes, in debate, the Imperial Parliament. The House of Lords was augmented by the addition of one Irish Archbishop, and three Bishops, appointed to sit in rotation of sessions; and of twenty-eight temporal Peers, elected for life. The House of Commons was enlarged by one hundred Irish Members, of whom sixty-four were representatives of counties, nine of cities, twenty-six of boroughs and towns, and one of the University of Dublin.

It was a question on which a difference of opinion prevailed among lawyers, whether a dissolution of Parliament ought not to have taken place before the opening of the first session of the *Imperial* Parliament; and, indeed, as the members, by the Union, possessed more extensive

powers than they had possessed at the period of their election, by now having to legislate for Ireland as well as for Great Britain, there were strong grounds for thinking that it ought to have been an entire new Parliament. It was, however, determined otherwise, and, on the 22d of January, the Parliament was opened by commission. Nothing, however, was done, but swearing in the members, and re-electing Mr. Addington as Speaker, for the fourth time, till the second of February, when the King attended in Parliament.

The period which elapsed, between the meeting of Parliament, and the delivery of the speech from the Throne, was unusually long; but its length was occasioned by a difference of opinion, which, unhappily, prevailed on a political subject of great importance, between the King and his Ministers. The Cabinet were desirous to mark the opening of the Imperial Parliament by a measure which, in their estimation, would be both popular and salutary;—that is, by removing all those barriers which the Papists chose to consider as an impediment to their admission to a full share of political power and privileges with their fellow-subjects of the Established Church. When Mr. Pitt had adverted to this subject, in introducing his propositions for an Union to the House of Commons, on the last day of January, 1799, he had expressed himself with the utmost caution, and had studiously avoided to give any pledge or promise, that, if the Union should take place, he would bring forward a proposal for the repeal of the test laws. He said—"*When the conduct of the Catholics shall be such as to make it safe for the government* to admit them to the participation of the privileges granted to those of the established religion, and *when the temper of the times shall be favourable to such a measure; when these events take place,* it is obvious that the question *may be* agitated in an united, imperial, Parliament, with much greater safety than it could be in a separate legislature." Here Mr. Pitt merely declared his *opinion,* that a subject of this nature would be more impartially discussed, by an united than by a separate legislature; and he certainly was of opinion, also, that the danger which would have attended such a measure before the Union would no longer subsist, or, at least, in a very subordinate degree, after the Union. Two conditions, however, he

here distinctly stated, as indispensable to the introduction of any proposition of the kind; namely, a *change in the conduct of the Catholics*; and the existence of a disposition in the public favourable to the measure. If inquiry be made whether either of these cases existed at the present moment; whether either of the two conditions, without the existence of both of which, at the same moment, it would, according to Mr. Pitt's own principle, be improper to bring forward a proposition for admitting Papists to all the offices in the State without a compliance with the forms which a Protestant was obliged to observe, it will be found that neither of them did exist, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. That the conduct of the Irish Papists had experienced no change, that the spirit of rebellion was still secretly brooding over the work of destruction so congenial to it, and still threatened to desolate that devoted country, is evident from Mr. Pitt's own admission, in little more than a month after the King opened the Imperial Parliament. In a debate, on the 12th of March, on a motion of Lord Castlereagh, respecting martial law in Ireland, Mr. Pitt, speaking in defence of the motion, and in proof of its necessity, from the internal state of the country, observed, "under the baneful influence of jacobinism, your enemies, though defeated in the field, only separate; *the vital principle of enmity to order, and social comfort, still remains,* confined, indeed, in scantier bounds, and with diminished means, though *with undiminished rancour.* The prerogative of exercising martial law, which was adequate to a sudden attack, and to a pressing danger, is not equal to contend with a *rebellion founded on principles so secret, so disseminated, so powerful, and so persevering.*" Here then were evident marks of the same spirit which prevailed in 1798, and which had rendered Ireland a scene of devastation and blood. As to the *temper of the times,* or the disposition of the public, it displayed not a single proof of partiality or favour to the removal of those barriers which our ancestors had deemed essential to the preservation of the constitution. Indeed, the numerous publications which issued from the press, as soon as the intentions of Ministers were known, clearly demonstrated, that a vast majority of the nation concurred with their Sovereign in his opinion of the impropriety, impolicy, and danger of

such an attempt, and Mr. Pitt, himself, very soon became convinced of this fact.

If, then, neither of the circumstances stated as indispensable to the adoption of the proposed measu e could be found to exist, it might be supposed, and, indeed, it was broadly insinuated, that some secret pledge had been given to the Irish Catholics, to induce them to favour the Union. But, it is most certain, as I have before stated, that no pledge or promise, open or secret, express or implied, was ever given, directly or indirectly, by Mr. Pitt, or by his authority, to bring forward, or to support, the Catholic Question. It might be presumed, then, that he had either altered his sentiments as to the *fitness* of the time for proposing it; had abandoned his original ideas on that point, on some notions of political expediency, which it would be difficult to appreciate; or else have yielded to the less cautious policy, and pressing suggestions, of some of his colleagues. Whatever was the cause, it is certain, that he now concurred in opinion with the majority of the Cabinet, that the dawn of the Union should be ushered in by an admission of those importunate claims which had hitherto been so firmly, and so wisely, resisted by the Irish Legislature, pliant and yielding as it was in its general policy to the Catholics. This point having been settled in the Cabinet, it was resolved to introduce a recommendation of the measure in the speech to be delivered from the Throne, at the opening of the Imperial Parliament. But it was necessary, in the first place, to remove from the mind of his Majesty those impressions which it was known to have imbibed, respecting the proposed concessions to the Papists. The performance of this difficult and delicate task, is understood to have been consigned to Mr. Dundas, (now Viscount Melville) and a more able advocate, perhaps, could not have been selected for the purpose. Of a conference which passed in the Royal Closet, few particulars can be expected to have transpired. It is very well known, however, that the powerful eloquence of Mr. Dundas, though exerted with a zeal adequate to the great occasion which called for its display, completely failed to shake the firm resolution of the Monarch. Indeed, his Majesty was too well grounded in those principles on which

alone a just decision of the question at issue could be formed, to be either deluded by casuistry, however ingenious, to be foiled by argument, however plausible, or to be betrayed by metaphysical distinctions, however subtle, into an admission which his conscience rejected, and his reason disavowed. He had very long, and very deeply, considered the subject; and the result of that consideration was the firm conviction that he could not, consistently with the solemn obligation which he had contracted, at the period of his coronation, and confirmed by the religious sanction of an oath, assent to the introduction of Popish Peers, Prelates, and Commoners, into the Imperial Parliament, and into the high offices of state: as, by so doing, he should fail to "maintain, *to the utmost of his power*, the true profession of the gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law."* It was, no doubt, urged by Mr. Dundas, as it was by others at the time, that this oath could only apply to the maintenance of the Protestant religion, as from time to time it *should be* the Church Establishment of the country, and that it would be absurd, in the extreme, and unconstitutional, to contend, that the expression in question precluded his Majesty from concurring with both Houses of Parliament, in *any legislative act*

* The words of the coronation oath, prescribed by Stat. 1. W. and M. c. 6. "I once heard it roundly asserted," says a sensible writer on this subject, "that, if the Houses of Lords and Commons should agree on a bill for subverting the Protestant establishment in Ireland, his Majesty, notwithstanding his coronation oath, would be bound to give it the royal assent, and thereby establish it as a law, because his coronation oath, in all particulars, is so to be construed, that it is not binding against the opinion of the two Houses. I never can agree with such reasoning,"—(or rather with such egregious folly) "I cannot find any such saying in the coronation oath,—it is an absolute oath; and I never can allow that the two Houses of Parliament have any such power as that of dispensing with the obligations of positive oaths. I believe and hope that the Parliament never will assume the power of absolving from the observance of oaths;—it would thereby assume the power arrogated by the Pope, which is so much, and so justly, reprobated by all good christians. And, as his Majesty is bound by his coronation oath inviolably to maintain the Protestant religion as it is now established in Ireland, so is he bound to resist all concession of privileges to any class of his subjects, which would impair or weaken that establishment; though, perhaps, they would not be at first attended, or immediately followed, by its total subversion."

*whatever.** But his Majesty, who was not less conversant with the history of the times in which that oath was originally framed, with the causes which produced it, the object to which it was directed, and the principles which influenced its adoption, than he was resolute in religiously observing it, could have no difficulty in proving the fallacy of this loose and unwarrantable construction. Most unfortunately, indeed, for such a position, the very case which now occurred, had, in a manner, been foreseen; for, while the form of the coronation oath was under discussion in the House of Commons, in the year 1689, an amendment was proposed, (obviously for the purpose of preventing the very objection which the King now pressed) that, instead of "*religion established by law,*" it should run thus: "As SHALL BE *established by law,*"† in order, as it was alleged, that the King might not be restrained by this oath from consenting to the alterations which it was then in contemplation to make, for tolerating Protestant Dissenters, in the free exercise of their religion;—so clearly did it appear to the legislators of that day, that the oath would have, and *was intended to have,* the effect of preventing the King from assenting to any act, which would endanger the Protestant establishment, by admitting those who were not members of the church to the same privileges which churchmen enjoyed. The amendment was rejected, not with a view to prevent the *toleration* of *Protestant* dissenters, but because it was considered that the oath was so worded as to admit of the King's assent to such a measure, which could not, it was conceived, endanger the Protestant establishment. From the proceedings on this occasion, it is perfectly evident, that the Parliament intended so to frame the oath as to prevent the King from exposing the Established Church to danger, by the admission of Papists to offices of trust.

Fully impressed with these ideas on the subject, it is not surprizing that his Majesty should have resisted every effort to persuade him that he might safely and conscientiously acquiesce in the measure proposed by

* See a *Letter to a Nobleman from Charles Butler, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn.*

† See Grey's Debates, March 28, 1689.

his Ministers. He is said to have abruptly terminated the conference by an observation on the inefficacy of Scotch metaphysics to destroy religious obligations. It must not, however, be inferred, from this conduct, on the part of Mr. Pitt, that he was either an unsteady, or an indifferent, member of the Established Church. He certainly was, from education, from principle, and from conviction, firmly attached to it; and had he believed that danger could result to it from the measure which the Cabinet wished to adopt, no earthly consideration would have induced him to assent to it. He had assuredly convinced himself that it might safely be adopted, with the guards with which he proposed to accompany it. In repealing the existing test, it was the intention of Mr. Pitt to propose a substitute which the Papists might conscientiously take, and which, he was of opinion, would answer every purpose of the other. Fully convinced as I am, that no adequate substitute for the test provided by our ancestors, could be devised by human wisdom, I am incompetent to speak, with decision, of the merits or defects, the efficacy or inefficacy, of Mr. Pitt's project to promote the same end by different means;—because all my endeavours to ascertain, with precision, the nature of the new test which he proposed to adopt, have proved unavailing. Indeed, from what I have been able to collect on the subject I incline to believe, that Mr. Pitt had not sufficiently digested and matured his plan to reduce it to form, to put it into that regular shape in which it might be submitted to discussion. I have no reason to think, that any written copy of it is in existence. It is certain, however, that Mr. Pitt's *intention* was, as has been stated by a competent judge, who had ample opportunity for ascertaining it, "to do away, as far as might be practicable, the mischievous effects of difference in religious opinions; to guard the established church, by more powerful sanctions against both Papists and Protestant Dissenters, and to give the cause of religion that additional protection which the prevalence of infidelity demanded;" and that it was Mr. Pitt's opinion, that his new test was "better adapted to the present times, and far more effectual, than the existing laws."* But with all the deference which I

* A Speech on the Character of the Right Honourable William Pitt, delivered in Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge, Dec. 17th, 1806, being commemoration day. By Edward Pretyman Tomline.

am disposed to pay to the judgment of this eminent Statesman, I cannot but think that it failed him on this occasion; and, while I know that it was his earnest desire to strengthen and secure the Established Church, to which he was zealously attached, by all practicable means, I am persuaded that he grossly deceived himself, in the present instance; and I am confirmed in that persuasion, by the conduct of a respectable prelate, who so well justified the confidence which Mr. Pitt reposed in him, by stating to him, in strong and forcible terms, his conviction of the danger of removing the existing test, and the utter impossibility of finding an adequate substitute. But, unhappily for himself, and for the nation, Mr. Pitt was greatly misinformed and misled, on the Catholic Question, more especially as it related to Ireland. It is, indeed, a matter of astonishment, that a mind so intelligent as Mr. Pitt's should not have immediately perceived the fallacy of the pretext urged to persuade him to the adoption of a measure, of, at least, doubtful policy, however partially it might be viewed, and of most momentous import:—a measure by which every thing would be risked; and, at best, but little gained. It could only gratify the nobility and gentry of the Romish faith, comparatively few in numbers, and certainly least formidable to the State; while it would leave untouched the sources of that misery and poverty under which the great mass of the Irish Papists, the farmers and the peasantry, laboured.—By opening the legislative Councils, and the great offices of State, to Papists, the ambition of the opulent few could alone be satisfied, while the distresses or grievances of the poor multitude would remain unrelieved and unredressed. To whatever sources, then, the popular disaffection which had agitated Ireland, and had, more than once, brought her to the very verge of destruction, might be traced or imputed, —the measure now resolved on by the Cabinet, could have no effect in removing it, except on a supposition which would falsify one of the principal reasons alleged in support of that measure. It could only be believed to operate so as to quell disaffection and to restore tranquillity, by the influence of those whom alone the measure was calculated to please. And, therefore, this belief must be founded on the supposition, that the Catholic nobility and gentry had such an ascendancy over the great mass of the Papists, as to render them obedient to their orders, and subservient to their will; whence it would naturally follow, that they

might have prevented or suppressed the rebellion of 1798, had they been so disposed;—but that they would not exert their power, until they had wrested from the government a full compliance with all their claims. The conclusion is inevitable, and cannot be shaken. But such a supposition would be a greater libel on the Irish nobility and gentry of the Romish persuasion than was ever uttered, a more severe reflection on their conduct and principles, than was ever cast, by the most strenuous opposer of their claims. It must be founded on a belief that they were capable of betraying the best interests of their country, of raising the standard of rebellion against their Sovereign, of endeavouring to subvert the established constitution of the realm, of coolly contemplating the destructive progress of murder and desolation through their native land, from an impulse of selfish resentment, from a motive of disappointed ambition. It would fix on them the degrading stigma, the foul disgrace, of having sacrificed the most imperative duties at the sordid shrine of interest. It would make their loyalty, not a principle of duty, but a subject of barter. And all the dishonourable conduct, thus imputed to them, would want even the pretext which *religious persecution* supplies, for they already enjoyed a full and perfect toleration; and what they claimed was not religious privileges, but political power. — If they really deserved this opinion, their conduct could not be "such as to make it safe for the government to admit them to the participation of the privileges granted to those of the Established Church." As, however, it would be the height of injustice to cast such unmerited reproaches on so respectable a body of subjects as the Popish nobility and gentry of Ireland, considered in the aggregate, it is impossible to admit the conclusion of Ministers, that their proposed measure would be productive of the beneficial effect which they, inconsiderately, ascribed to it.

So much has been said on the general question of the expediency and wisdom of the Test Laws, in the preceding parts of this history, that there can be no necessity for entering into a fresh discussion of the subject; especially as nothing new was urged, on the present occasion, to justify a departure from the wise policy of our ancestors. Besides the weight of the reasons already urged, there was another powerful consideration, which, I should have thought, would have had great influence

with such a *practical* statesman as Mr. Pitt. The proposed indulgence to the Papists was certainly a *speculative* measure; it had not the sanction of *experience*; on the contrary, experience was against it, for every concession hitherto made to the Papists, particularly within the last few years, had produced nothing but increased disorder and wider disaffection. Now it was contrary to one of the acknowledged maxims of Mr. Pitt's policy, and, indeed, repugnant to his general conduct, to oppose *speculation* to *experience*, *theory* to *practice*. It has been well observed, by a writer, at once simple and profound, plain in language, but deep in thought, who has studied the Constitution of this country with a truly philosophic mind,—that "a determination to preserve the Constitution as it is, must ever be allowed, at least, a safe policy; it is only going on as we have done: but the experiment of an alteration may lead us into mischiefs, which the innovator himself never intended; such as no human foresight could predict, and no human ingenuity may ever redress. The wisdom of "not doing" is, therefore, a wisdom which should ever be respected; it generally is coupled with knowledge, and with experience; and it is sure of this good effect, that it makes a pause, in which others may have leisure to learn caution and prudence." This is the language of practical wisdom; such wisdom as should be allowed alike to regulate the concerns of domestic life, and the operations of a government; such, in short, as Mr. Pitt displayed, through the whole course of his political career, with a solitary exception applicable to his conduct at this critical period of his administration, and on this particular point. I cannot but conceive, that he now suffered his better judgment to be led astray by the confidence of inferior minds; allowed himself to be directed where he ought to have directed others; and gave his assent to a measure, the fatal consequences of which he certainly did not appreciate, from misrepresentations which he had not the means of correcting, and to which, his reliance on the reports of those who saw objects through a false medium, induced him, too implicitly perhaps, to trust.

Enough, possibly, may have been said, in the course of the remarks on the state of Ireland, and on the concessions granted, at different periods, to the Papists of that country, respecting the dangerous tenets of the Church of Rome. But as efforts were now made to persuade the Pro-

testant community, numbers of whom had had but little occasion to investigate the subject, that a total change had taken place, in the principles of the modern Papists, which removed the danger to be apprehended to the state from some of the tenets of their ancestors; and as the King was, irreverently enough, rendered a party in many of the public discussions, it becomes a duty, in a Protestant writer, to correct the effects of misrepresentation, and to place the question before his readers in a plain point of view.

By those who contend for the reality of this change, it is, of course, admitted, that the Catholics of former days did maintain tenets and principles incompatible with the safety of a Protestant State. Whence did these tenets and principles arise? Certainly from the decretals of the Popes, or the decrees of the Councils, the only infallible authority, on points of doctrine, admitted by Papists. If, then, it be proved, that these decretals, or these decrees, retain the same importance, and the same authority, in the estimation of modern Papists, which they possessed in the eyes of their ancestors; and if, setting aside, for the better confirmation of the argument, the admission before stated, it can be demonstrated, that the decretals of the Popes, or the decrees of the General Councils of the Church of Rome, did promulgate tenets hostile to the existence of a Protestant establishment, the loose assertion of a radical change in their principles will be overthrown, and the vain fabric erected upon it will fall to the dust, by the removal of its sandy foundation. On such a subject, recourse must be had to papal authorities, which are, indeed, the least objectionable that can be urged on a point of this nature.

The first authority to be quoted, is one particularly apposite and strong, because universally recognized by the Papists of Ireland. Dr. Troy, the Romish Archbishop of Dublin, and, of course, a man of weight and consideration with persons of his own persuasion, and, moreover, deriving his power immediately from the Pope, published, in the year 1793, a pastoral letter, the object of which was to explain the nature of the Papal Supremacy, and to shew, that all Romanists were bound to pay implicit obedience to the authority of General Councils. The following passage is extracted from that letter:

"It is a *fundamental article* of the Roman Catholic faith, that the Pope, or Bishop, of Rome, is successor to Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles; in that see he enjoys, by divine right, a spiritual and ecclesiastical supremacy, not only of honour and rank, but of *real jurisdiction and authority*, in the universal church. Roman Catholics conceive this point as clearly established in the scriptures, and by the constant tradition of the fathers, in every age, as it is by *the express decisions of their General Councils, which they consider as* INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY *in points of doctrine.*"

Here then it is clearly established, by an authority, the validity of which no Papist will presume to question, that the decrees of the General Councils were infallible authority, in points of doctrine, with the Papists of the eighteenth century, as much as with those of any preceding age. Here was not only no change avowed, but a continued and express uniformity of belief, directly asserted. In fact, nothing but the most profound ignorance of the practice of Papists, and of the tenets of their church, or the most inveterate determination to misrepresent them, could have led any one to assert the existence of a change which struck at the fundamental doctrine of *infallibility*. This point, then, of the implicit obedience of Papists to the decrees of their General Councils being established, on indisputable authority, nothing more would be requisite to destroy the arguments of those who contend for the change in their prinples, as a ground for further indulgence, since they must proceed on the implied admission, that the tenets of the Romish church were formerly dangerous to a Protestant State, else the supposed change could supply no possible reason for extended indulgence. But it will not be useless to prove, by a decree of one of those Councils, that they did propagate tenets, most hostile to all but Popish establishments. The third chapter of the fourth Council of Lateran, holden in 1215, contains a general injunction to all *secular powers to exterminate heretics*, and then proceeds thus:

"But if any temporal Lord neglect to purge his dominions of such heretical corruption, after being required and admonished by the church, by his Metropolitans, and his other provincial Bishops, so to do, *let him be immediately bound in the chains of excommunication*; and if he shall

contumaciously refuse to make satisfaction, and to submit himself to the church within the year, *let this be signified to the Pope, who shall thereupon declare his subjects absolved from their allegiance, and proclaim his territories open to the just seizure and occupation of Catholic powers, who, after they have exterminated the heretics, shall possess them without controul, and preserve them in the purity of faith, still preserving the title of the principal Lord, provided he shall give them no interruption, or oppose any impediment to their proceedings; and let the same rule be observed with respect to those who have no principal Lords, i. e. Republics.*

"We decree, that not only those who profess heretical tenets, but all receivers, protectors, and favourers, of heretics, are *ipso facto*, excommunicated; and we strictly ordain and command that, after any such shall be publicly branded with excommunication, if they shall refuse to make satisfaction and submit themselves to the church within a year, *they shall be infamous, nor shall they be admitted to any public office or council, nor to elect any persons to such, nor to give testimony in any cause; neither shall they be capable of making wills, nor of succession, as heirs or representatives, to any estate; they shall be incapable of suing in any court, but may themselves be sued: if any such person shall happen to be a judge of any court, his sentence shall be null and void, nor shall any cause be prosecuted before him: if he shall happen to be an advocate, he shall not be admitted to practise: if a notary, instruments drawn up, prepared, witnessed, or executed by him, shall also be void and of no effect, but condemned with their guilty framer: and we command that the same rule be observed in all similar cases. But if he be a clergyman, let him be deposed both ab officio et beneficio,* that, as his crime is the greater, so the greater may be his punishment."

It is impossible to read this decree, and Doctor Troy's Letter, without concluding, that the General Councils promulgate tenets incompatible with the safety of a Protestant government, and that all Papists consider the decrees of General Councils as infallible, and hold themselves bound to obey them. This decree, indeed, affords a pretty significant exposition of that "*real jurisdiction and authority*," which the Pope not only

exercises over Catholic Communities, but over *Protestant*, or *Heretical* States; a jurisdiction and authority, however *spiritual* in its origin, most *temporal* in its application and punishments; dissolving, at its pleasure, the ties of allegiance, releasing subjects from their oaths of obedience, dispossessing Monarchs of their lawful thrones, and inflicting arbitrary punishments without any regard to the laws of the country in which the offender may live.

It was natural to suppose, that Ministers, before they attempted to place Papists upon the same footing with Protestants, or rather, on a more advantageous footing, (because they were to be entitled to the same privileges without submitting to the same conditions) they would call upon them formally, and unequivocally, to renounce the doctrine contained in the above decree; and to express their dissent from the declaration of Dr. Troy, that they were bound to obey all the decrees and decisions of the General Councils; because, it was clear that if they acted up to their principles, and obeyed the decree, above cited, the privileges which they actually enjoyed, instead of being extended, ought to be materially curtailed. There is no false reasoning in these observations; no forced construction of doubtful passages; no imputation of motives, or of acts, except such as are publicly avowed by the Papists themselves. God forbid, however, that any thing here advanced should be construed into a wish to encourage a spirit of religious intolerance; no, let every denomination of Christians experience from the British government perfect liberty of conscience, and the fullest toleration; and such the Papists of Ireland enjoyed at this period, and still continue to enjoy. But between *toleration* and *encouragement* the difference is substantive and essential. Nor when the facts above stated are duly considered, and, moreover, that a Popish Bishop, at his consecration, takes an oath, not only to preserve and defend, but to *augment* and *promote*, the Papal power; and farther says, "heretics, schismatics, and rebels, to our holy father, and his successors, *I shall resist and persecute to my power*," can it be regarded as intolerant to contend for the necessity of keeping a watchful and jealous eye over the professors of such dangerous tenets? It does, indeed, appear to me to be a duty incumbent on all Roman Catholics who assert their right to a full participation of political power, not merely to make general

professions of loyalty and attachment to the constitution, but explicitly to disclaim the authority of this Council of Lateran; for, if that be deemed binding, as Dr. Troy maintains the decisions of all General Councils to be, to assert that no danger can accrue to a Protestant government from the admission of their claims to an equality of political power, is to offer an insult to the common sense of the nation. Every one must wish to see Catholics in possession of every privilege compatible with the safety of the establishment; but when their prelates are bound by an oath to the *resistance* and *persecution* of all the members of the established church; and are also subjected to a foreign authority, claiming the right of absolving subjects from their oaths of allegiance; every consistent Protestant must enter his protest against the admission of claims, which, under these circumstances, cannot but be regarded as totally incompatible with the safety of the British Constitution, in Church and State.

As the King remained firm to his point, it was necessary for the Ministers to consider what line of conduct it became them now to pursue. It was clear that there existed no necessity for entering into any discussion of this difficult question; it was equally clear, that, as no pledge had been given, there could be no necessity for the Ministers to press the point against the will of their Sovereign; and even conceiving, as it must be supposed they did, that the measure in question would promote the welfare and tranquillity of the country, still they might go on, as they had hitherto done, and postpone its consideration to a future opportunity. They, however, thought otherwise, and, not having been able to carry their point, they chose, even in the most critical situation of public affairs, to resign their places. Mr. Pitt was determined, however, to render his resignation as little distressing to his Sovereign as possible; and he therefore consented not only to remain in office until a new administration should be arranged, but even to perform one of the least pleasing, and most difficult, duties of a Minister, in providing ways and means for defraying the expences of the current year.

This point being so far settled, the King opened the Parliament on the second of February; when he expressed great satisfaction in being enabled, at a crisis so important, to avail himself, for the first time, of the

Parliament of his United Kingdom. This memorable æra, distinguished by the accomplishment of a measure calculated to augment and consolidate the strength and resources of the empire, and to cement more closely the interests and affections of his subjects, would, he trusted, be equally marked by that vigour, energy, and firmness, which circumstances so peculiarly required. His Majesty stated, as matter of astonishment, as well as regret, that the continental powers appeared more engaged in endeavours to weaken the naval force of the British empire, the great obstacle to the inordinate ambition of France, than in concerting means of mutual defence against their common and increasing danger. The representations presented to the Court of Petersburgh, in consequence of the late outrages, had been treated with the utmost disrespect, and aggravated by subsequent acts of injustice and violence; and a convention had avowedly been concluded between Russia, Denmark, and Sweden, for establishing, by force, a new code of maritime law, inconsistent with the rights, and hostile to the interests, of this country. In this situation, his Majesty had taken the earliest opportunity to repel the aggressions of this hostile confederacy, and support the legal and recognized principles so essential to the maintenance of our naval strength; but had, at the same time, given assurances which manifested his disposition to renew his ancient relations with those powers, whenever it could be done with a just regard to the safety of his subjects; and he was persuaded Parliament would omit nothing which could afford him vigorous and effectual support in his firm determination to maintain to the utmost, against every attack, the naval rights, and the interests, of the empire.

After recommending to the two Houses the great object of improving the benefits of the Union, and the consideration of means for removing the existing scarcity, his Majesty assured them that he would seize the earliest opportunity of terminating, consistently with security and honour, the present contest.

The address was carried by very large majorities in both Houses. Mr. Cornwallis, by whom it was seconded in the Commons, observed, in relation to the Union, that, in order to give it full effect, many measures, naturally consecutive upon it, would, no doubt, be, from time to time,

adopted. To heal divisions, it was to be desired that nothing *consistent with the full security of the Protestant religion in Ireland* should be omitted. This expression gave offence to Mr. Grey, who, in opposing the address, remarked, that he should have augured more favourably of the Union, had he found that the King's speech contained a recommendation (as it was reported it would) to consider of taking off those disabilities to which the Catholics of Ireland were subject. Mr. Grey must have known, that no *disabilities* were imposed by the law on Catholics more than on Protestants;—every situation was equally open to all subjects, on the observance of a condition equally imposed upon all;—and, if the Catholic did not choose to observe that condition, the disability was imposed by himself, and not by the Legislature. He proceeded to remark that, the surest means of incorporating the two countries, and cementing their connection, would be to extend to all, in common, the blessings of the constitution. Here again he insinuated, that the Catholics of Ireland were deprived of those blessings, as if the blessings of the British constitution consisted in the ability to hold about thirty of the highest offices in the State, without subscribing the test which had been expressly formed for the defence of that constitution! He expressed his regret that no such measure was hinted at; and he declared that he felt a great degree of jealousy, at a phrase in the speech of Mr. Cornwallis, alluding to "*what might be consistent with the security of the Protestant religion?*" That a professed whig, who admired the principles of the revolution, and so frequently reminded the House of Brunswick, that those principles had placed them on the Throne, should be jealous of too great a regard for the security of the Protestant religion, the protection of which, and the dread of Popery, occasioned the revolution, was well calculated to excite surprize. In the course of his speech, Mr. Grey adverted to all the topics connected with the conduct of Ministers, which he freely censured with his usual asperity of language; modestly contending, that the Minority spoke the sense of the nation.

This position was controverted by Mr. Pitt, who defended the conduct of Ministers from the groundless imputations of their opponents. He animadverted, with particular strength, on the scepticism of Mr. Grey, with respect to the rights which they had asserted in the dispute with

the Northern powers; and he clearly shewed, that the conduct of those powers was in direct violation, not only of the recognized law of nations, and established practice, but of particular treaties by which each of them was bound to this country. But Mr. Pitt did not advert to the peculiar situation of the Cabinet, nor even uttered a word respecting the Union. The division was 245 against 63; almost as great a majority as Mr. Pitt could boast during the meridian of his power.

In a very few days the approaching change of Ministers became a matter of public notoriety, and, on the tenth of February, Lord Grenville, in the House of Peers, avowed the fact. He observed that, some time before, Lord Spencer, Lord Chatham, himself, and several others of the Ministry, who were members of the House of Commons, had thought it *expedient* that the benefits of the Union should be rendered as great and as extensive as possible, by the removal of certain disabilities, under which a great portion of the inhabitants of Ireland laboured. "Imagining," he said, "that this measure could alone be effectual, if, coming from the executive government, we felt it our duty to propose it to those who direct his Majesty's Councils. It was not deemed eligible, and we were unable to prevail. Our opinion of its *policy* remaining unaltered, and still thinking that, and that alone, could establish the tranquillity and prosperity of the empire on a permanent basis, we considered ourselves bound to retire. Accordingly, we tendered to his Majesty the resignation of our several employments; and he has been graciously pleased to dispense with our services. Thus, my Lords, we only hold our offices till our successors are appointed." His Lordship expressed a warm sense of his Majesty's uniform attention to him, during the course of his administration, and of the flattering marks of royal regard, which had accompanied his resignation. After commenting on the good effects of past exertions, he adverted to his successors in office, and added,—"It is our consolation to reflect, that the same vigorous line of conduct will still be pursued. Though we have retired from office, no change of measures will take place; but the system which has already proved so salutary will continue to be acted upon by our successors; though we may differ from them in some points, in most there is no difference between us, and while they continue to act in a firm, resolute, and

manly manner, they shall have our steady support. Our most anxious wish is, that they may receive from your Lordships, and the public, the same support which we have experienced. Divisions, indecision, timidity, and despondency, must, at the present moment, be ruin. It is only by unanimity and firmness that the country can be saved." These manly and liberal sentiments did honour to his Lordship; but, as he so feelingly described the evil effect of divisions, at this critical period, it was naturally enquired, how he could think of disturbing the unanimity which prevailed, by the unnecessary discussion of a question particularly calculated to provoke dissension. Lord Spencer confirmed the accuracy of Lord Grenville's statement of the cause of the change in the Ministry.

On the same day, Mr. Addington notified, to the House of Commons, his acceptance of a high situation under the Crown, and his consequent resignation of the Speaker's chair; and, on the following day, Sir John Mitford (now Lord Redesdale) was chosen to succeed him. On the eighteenth of February, Mr. Pitt performed his last ministerial act, by opening the budget. In a committee of supply, the House had previously resolved, that the complement of men for the navy, for the current year, should be 135,000, including 30,000 marines, being 15,000 more men than had been employed in 1800;—and had voted for the army 193,187 regulars, which, with 78,016 militia, and 31,415 fencibles, in Britain and Ireland, composed an effective force, independent of volunteers, of 302,648 men. The House being now formed into a committee of ways and means, Mr. Pitt first directed his attention to that part of the estimates which, under the provisions of the Union, were to be jointly borne by Great Britain and Ireland, describing, first, the charges to be incurred, and then the means by which he proposed to provide for them. The whole of the supplies were as follows:

		£	£
Navy			15,800,000
Army	England. . 9,617,000		
	Do. extras. 2,500,000	12,117,000	
	Ireland	3,785,000	15,902,000
Ordnance	England	1,639,000	
	Ireland	299,000	1,938,000
Miscellaneous	England	550,000	
	Ireland	207,000	757,000
Vote of Credit	England	500,000	
	Ireland	300,000	800,000
Irish permanent grants			390,462
		Total. .	£35,587,462

The relative proportion of expences to be paid by the two countries, as settled by the act of Union, was two-seventeenths by Ireland, and fifteen-seventeenths by Great Britain. These Mr. Pitt stated, therefore, under distinct heads. The permanent charge in this country, for the civil list, and other demands on the consolidated fund, not relating to the public debt, were, however, to be allotted in due proportion; they amounted to £1,170,000, two-seventeenths of which being to be borne by Ireland, and being added to her share of the sum before stated, would make the whole of her burden £4,324,000. Whatever else remained, except the national debt of Ireland, was to be provided for by Great Britain. The demands attaching exclusively to England, were such arose from causes existing before the period of the Union. The first of these, mentioned by Mr. Pitt, proceeded from the late unfavourable seasons, which had affected several branches of the public revenue; and he did not think it right, according to a fair and liberal construction of the articles of Union, that Ireland should bear any share in the defalcation so produced. Other deficiencies to be supplied solely by England were specified, of which the general abstract was:— To make good the deficiency of the income tax for 1800, £1,000,000; discount upon the loan and lottery, £200,000; deficiency of malt duties of 1799, £400,000; to pay off Exchequer bills issued on the credit of the assessed taxes of 1798, the imports and exports, and the income duties of 1799, £1,350,000; interest of the Exchequer Bills, £460,000; for the Sinking Fund, £200,000; to pay off Exchequer

Bills issued on the Consolidated Fund, £3,000,000;—making a total of £6,610,000. Thus it appeared, the whole charge on the two countries would amount to £42,197,000, of which Ireland was to pay £4,324,000, and England the remainder.

Mr. Pitt next detailed the Ways and Means. The permanent resources of the country, including the duties on sugar, malt, and tobacco; the lottery, the income tax, after deducting the interest with which it was charged, the duty upon exports and imports, the surplus of the consolidated fund, the sum to be provided by Ireland, a sum not issued for subsidies, and the surplus of grants, he rated at £16,744,000. So that it would be necessary to raise a loan of £25,500,000 in order to make up the sum necessary for the service of the year. This loan, though it was now the tenth year of an expensive war, Mr. Pitt had raised on terms highly advantageous to the country, and highly honourable to the monied men, who seemed emulous to prove the solidity of the national resources, by taking the loan without any bonus or premium, except the discount of £3. 12*s.* per cent. for prompt payment, which, as they had taken the stock at a higher rate than the market price, would reduce the profit to two per cent. The interest on this sum Mr. Pitt proposed to pay by a new duty of ten per cent. on all teas* sold at the Company's sales for more than half a crown per pound; by doubling the existing duty on paper, with certain exceptions; by an additional duty of 2½d. per yard on all printed cottons, which now paid 3½d. per yard duty; by a duty of 1s. 10d. per cwt. on sugar; by an increase of one-third on the existing duty on timber, and, of four per cent. on its value; by new duties on pepper, raisins, and lead; by a new duty on horses, where only one was kept for pleasure, ten shillings; where more than one, twenty shillings; and on horses used in husbandry, four shillings. The Stamp duties on bills, notes, sea policies, and deeds, were to be augmented, and the rates of postage of letters to be raised.

* This striking fact appeared in Mr. Pitt's statement.—The measures which he had adopted for the repression of contraband trade had been so effective, that, though only 6,000,000 pounds of tea had been sold, before the Commutation act passed, the sale had now increased to 22,000,000.

	£.
Tea	300,000
Paper	132,000
Printed Cotton	154,000
Sugar	166,000
Pepper	119,000
Stamps	350,000
Horses	306,000
Post Office	150,000
Timber	95,000
Raisins	10,000
Lead	12,000
	£ 1,794,000

The amount of the interest to be thus provided for was £1,785,000; and the produce of the proposed taxes was estimated as follows:

Mr. Pitt expressed his regret at the failure of his expectations, respecting the produce of the income tax, by which he was obliged to reduce his estimate, which was originally ten millions, to six millions. Still, though this tax would not answer the whole of the purpose for which it had been destined, it had been productive of the best effects, by reducing the amount of loans, and by increasing the facility of raising them. And he was of opinion, that it should be continued, as it then was, until, with the aid of the sinking fund, the national debt should be reduced to the amount at which it stood in the year 1798, when the income tax was first proposed; and this reduction would be completed in six years.

He mentioned, as a proof of the prosperous state of the country, that the amount of the revenue for the year ending in January, 1801, had exceeded, by £1,800,000, the computation of the Committee, which had taken into its consideration the finances of the kingdom, while, by the beneficial operation of the sinking fund, fifty-two millions of the national debt had been liquidated, and the fund itself increased to five millions. Mr. Pitt concluded his statement with these consolatory reflections, of which his own wise system of policy had supplied the basis.

"We find, therefore, that, notwithstanding the burdens of this war, more than one half of the debt contracted by our ancestors at one time has been completely paid off. We find that the amount of our permanent revenue is greater than it has ever been in any former years either of peace or war; and what is still more deserving of your consideration, that, during the whole course of this war, which some gentlemen have thought proper to call disastrous and ruinous, this maritime nation, exposed as she has been to such numberless difficulties, to the hostility of so many powers, and obliged to maintain an immense naval and military force, has every year been increasing in resources. We have increased our external and internal commerce to a greater pitch than ever; and we may look to the present as the proudest year that has ever yet occurred for this country. The manufactures exported from this country amount, in one year, according to the latest estimate, to the value of twenty-four millions, and the amount of foreign produce that has been exported is no less than seventeen millions. If, therefore, we compare this year of war with former years of peace, we shall, in the produce of our revenue, and in the extent of our commerce, behold a spectacle at once paradoxial, inexplicable, and astonishing: we shall see that, in spite of the alarm and agitation which have often prevailed in the course of this arduous contest, in spite of the difficulties occasioned by the strange conduct of foreign nations, in spite of the despondency which has occasionally prevailed, we have still been adding to our resources, and increasing the means of continuing a war that was undertaken and carried on, for the maintenance of our honour, our independence, and safety; for the defence of all that was dear to the civilized world, and for the existence of a constitution eminently adapted to all the purposes of public liberty and of private happiness. Amidst all the dangers that surround us, and the difficulties with which we may be embarrassed, we have still the consolation to think, that we can look up with confidence to the power and resources of the Country; that we have the ability to meet, and to defeat, all the schemes and combinations, which our enemies may practise or raise up against us. From this animating prospect we can look back, with heart-felt satisfaction, to what we have done; we can say to the world, that we have discharged a most difficult duty; that, under all circumstances,

we have maintained our consistency and our independence; and, in short, Sir, that we have done every thing, which was at once calculated to preserve the rights of a just and benevolent Sovereign, under whose reign the people have enjoyed such unexampled happiness,—every thing that could tend to exalt the character of a great and wise legislature, and preserve the liberties of a brave and loyal people."

The resolutions proposed by Mr. Pitt were carried; and bills were soon after brought in; and, after various discussions, and the introduction of some modifications of particular taxes, passed into laws. On a subsequent day, Mr. Pitt's successor proposed a repeal of the tax on printed calicoes, and of part of the new duty on paper, amounting, in the whole, to £232,000; and an additional duty on stamps, and playing cards and dice, was adopted as a substitute.

Mr. Pitt having resigned his official situation on the 14th of March, the New Ministry was announced to the public. It consisted of Mr. Addington, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer; Duke of Portland, President of the Council; Lord Eldon, Chancellor; Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Privy Seal; Earl St. Vincent, First Lord of the Admiralty; Earl of Chatham, Master-General of the Ordnance; Lord Pelham, Secretary of State for the Home Department; Lord Hawkesbury, Secretary for the Foreign Department; Lord Hobart, Secretary for the Department of War and the Colonies; Lord Lewisham, (succeeded by Lord Castlereagh) President of the Board of Controul; Right. Hon. Charles Yorke, Secretary at War; Earl of Liverpool, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Right Hon. Dudley Ryder, (now Lord Harrowby) Treasurer of the Navy; Right Hon. Thomas Steele, and Lord Glenbervie, Joint Paymasters of the Forces; Lord Auckland and Lord Charles Spencer, Joint Postmasters-General; John Hiley Addington and Nicholas Vansittart, Esqs. Secretaries of the Treasury; Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls; Sir Edward Law, (now Lord Ellenborough) Attorney-General; Honourable Spencer Perceval, Solicitor-General; Earl of Hardwicke, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; Earl of Clare, Lord Chancellor; Lord Castlereagh (succeeded by Mr. Wickham) Chief Secretary; and the Right Hon. Isaac Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Ministry contained, as will be seen, several Members of the late Administration; many men of solid and useful, though none of brilliant and first rate, talents; men, however, who possessed still more essential qualifications for office than splendid abilities,—*sound principles*; a rooted attachment to the Established Church, and, as might be supposed, by their acceptance of office under such circumstances, a fixed determination to defend its interests, against all speculative schemes, and innovating projects. But it is customary to consider the talents and knowledge of the Prime Minister, as the criterion, by which the merits of a whole Administration are to be judged. Without admitting the justice of this criterion, it may not be amiss to observe, that Mr. Addington's principles and talents had been highly praised by those who were deemed most competent to speak of them with decision; by Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, both of whom stated their determination to support him and his colleagues, from a conviction that they would strictly pursue the same manly, firm, and steady policy which had been followed by their predecessors. It is still possible, that both these statesmen may have been led to overrate the abilities of the new Premier, by their respect for his principles; and by not duly considering the difference between the qualifications which are necessary for an efficient speaker of the House of Commons, and those which are requisite to form an able Prime Minister. He was, however, entitled to credit for his ready obedience to the commands of his Sovereign, by which alone he was induced to accept this arduous situation,— a situation from which an ordinary mind would have shrunk, immediately after it had been filled by Mr. Pitt.

The first information which Mr. Addington received of the approaching change was from his Sovereign, who, having commanded his attendance at Buckingham House, apprized him of the difference between him and his Ministers, and of his resolution never to assent to the measure which they wished to carry.—His Majesty, at the same time, desired him to think of forming a new Ministry, of which he was to be the head. Mr. Addington immediately communicated this information to Mr. Pitt, and earnestly pressed him to forego a design, which could not fail, if persisted in, to be productive of the most injurious

consequences to the country, in the present critical situation of public affairs. No conduct could be more honourable, or more praiseworthy, than this.

It is highly probable, that Mr. Pitt was consulted by the King on the composition of the new Ministry, which contained so many of his friends, and the principal members of which stood, in a manner, pledged to be guided by his principles of policy. The Opposition, however, delighted, as they were, with the resignation of the Cabinet, appeared greatly displeased at finding the possibility of forming a new Ministry without having recourse to them. It was, no doubt, considered by them as a great act of presumption in the King; and they expressed their displeasure, in both Houses, in terms so gross as to betray the source from which they sprang. They chose to take the incapacity of the new Ministers for granted, and resolutely condemned them without a trial. There was only one of them whom the Whigs of Opposition condescended to praise, because he was a professed Whig himself, and a member of certain clubs at which orators are fond of displaying their factious eloquence; and though they were joined in their commendations, by Mr. Pitt himself, it is certain, and experience has proved the fact, that either for talents or principles he was less intitled to praise than any member of the new Cabinet; and, in truth, the commendable qualities, or qualifications, which he possesses, still remain to be discovered, a fit subject for the exercise of speculative research. A candid appeal to the justice of the public, desiring to be judged by their actions, was ill-calculated to obtain an impartial hearing at a Whig Tribunal; and the Opposition, accordingly, dismissed the appeal, and rejected the suit.

Speculation and curiosity were now afloat to ascertain the true cause of the late resignations. Even Lord Grenville's explanation did not satisfy the public. And, in order to bring the matter into discussion, to cast censure on the old Ministers, and to embarras the new, Mr. Grey, on the 25th of March, moved for an inquiry into the state of the nation. In the speech which introduced his motion, Mr. Grey took a view of the whole conduct of Mr. Pitt's Administration, from

the commencement of the French Revolution to the present moment; he found in it every thing to condemn, and nothing to commend. To those who composed it he imputed all the misfortunes which overwhelmed Europe; all was, on their side, disaster and disgrace; while the mighty genius who governed France, trusting to the resources of his own mind, restored life and energy to the government, led on his armies to victory, and laid his enemies at his mercy. Most of the enemies of Great Britain drew forth his commendations, and he particularly eulogized the confederated powers of the North. He censured the late Ministers for resigning their places; talked of an engagement which they had contracted with the Catholics of Ireland; and arraigned them for entering into it without the knowledge of the Crown.—Mr. Whitbread seconded his motion, and Mr. Dundas confuted his assertions. As a strong proof of that unvaried disgrace, which Mr. Grey had attached to the British arms, during the whole progress of the war, Mr. Dundas produced a list of conquests, beginning with the capture of Tobago, in 1793, and ending with the reduction of Malta, in 1800.—And, in farther illustration of the disastrous policy of Ministers, he exhibited a list of ships taken or destroyed since the commencement of the contest. It contained 78 ships of the line, 181 frigates, and 234 smaller vesels, making a total of 483 ships of war, besides 743 French privateers, 15 Dutch, and 76 Spanish, in all 834, which, added to the ships of war, formed 1317 vessels equipped for warlike purposes. In the East and West, our successes had been complete and important. Our trade to the Colonies, conquered from our enemies, was most extensive; and our general commerce had flourished and increased beyond example. Mr. Dundas proved, from a comparison of the conquests effected, and ships taken, in the seven years war conducted by the late Lord Chatham, with the same objects in the present war, that the latter had been successful beyond any other. "With this result before him," said he, "the Minister, who, for so many years, had guided the councils of this country, and had superintended the conduct and operations of the war, need not be afraid to transmit his fame to posterity, as a companion to that of his illustrious father.

There were two striking points of difference in the two wars to which

Mr. Dundas had adverted, which rendered the comparison in favour of the last infinitely more strong. Mr. Pitt had difficulties to surmount which his father never had to contend with; namely, the revolutionary power of France, which, while it gave an unnatural vigour to the exertions of the enemy, had a tendency to palsy our energies, and to cramp our efforts at home; the total disregard of all principles of public faith, as existing between nation and nation, which enabled the Republican government to direct their attacks to quarters where they were least expected, and, consequently, to multiply the points of resistance; and, lastly, the different state of parties in England. During Lord Chatham's administration, a suspension of animosities took place; party feelings and party animosities were not less acrimonious, in reality, than they were at present; but the conduct of parties was widely different; the country was then supposed to be in imminent danger; and men of every description felt themselves bound to unite for the purpose of saving it. During the present contest, a spirit of a very opposite tendency had been woefully displayed. The necessity and justice of the war had been reviled. The necessary evils of war had been exaggerated by every expression calculated to inflame the minds of the people; and in so far as it was possible for our enemies to derive comfort and consolation from the representations conveyed to them, they had been cherished and encouraged in the conflict.

In answer to Mr. Grey's observations on the change of Ministers, Mr. Dundas denied that there was any mystery in the transaction, as had been asserted; and affirmed that those who resigned on account of a serious difference of opinion, must have incurred the most severe and merited censure, had they acted otherwise; but they retired in no disgust, nor in any spirit of faction. They perceived, with heartfelt satisfaction, that the talents, the character, and the virtues, of their successors had intitled them to the confidence of their Sovereign; and he could only prove the sincerity of this feeling, by declaring his determination to give them his decided support in whatever way it could be useful.

Mr. Pitt confirmed this statement, and avowed the same sentiments. In speaking of the measure which had induced him to quit his situation,

he said, that he did believe the importance of it, and the circumstances by which it was attended, to be such, that, while he remained in office, he should have been unable to bring it forward in the way which was likely to be eventually successful; and, therefore, he judged that he should serve the public less beneficially, as well as the parties who were more immediately the objects of it, in making the attempt, than in desisting from the measure. His idea of the measure itself was, that it was one which, upon the whole, had better been adopted than refused, under all the circumstances; such was, also, the idea of those who had acted with him, and they had, therefore, thought it better that they should quit their offices than continue, under such circumstances, in his Majesty's service. In doing this, they had acted purely from principle; they had acted in such a manner as to satisfy their own minds, which was to them important; and he hoped they had acted in such a manner as would, one day or other, be perfectly satisfactory to the public, so far as the public should ever think it worth their while to be concerned in his conduct.

Adverting to the measure itself, had he proposed it, as at one time he wished, it was not one which the Opposition were likely to look on lightly, although he should have had the good fortune to have their support if he had brought it forward, that is, in one part of it; but he did not think that they would have approved of the whole of it; nor did he believe that they would have favoured the whole of the principle on which he should have proposed the measure. He declared, he was not anxious to have the question agitated at all, at that moment. He did not think that that was a period, in which it could be agitated beneficially to the public, or to the Papists themselves; but, whenever it should be agitated, he should be ready and willing to go fully into it, and to give his opinion at large upon it. He would only say, at present, that as to any thing which he, and his colleagues, had it in contemplation to bring forward, he disclaimed the very words in common use,—"the emancipation of the Catholics," or "Catholic emancipation." He had never so understood the subject; he never understood the situation of the Catholics to be such; he did not then understand it to be such, as that any relief from it could be correctly so described; but he thought the few remaining benefits, of

which they had not yet participated, might have been added safely to the many benefits which had been so bounteously conferred on them, in the course of the present reign. He had been of opinion, and he still was of opinion, that those benefits, if they had preceded the Union, would have been rash and destructive. He had been of opinion then, he was of opinion now, that the very measure to which he alluded, as a claim of right, could not be maintained; and it was on the ground of liberality alone, and political expediency, that he should have thought it desirable, advisable, and important; but he would not have had it founded on a naked proposition, to repeal any one thing which former policy had deemed expedient for the safety of the Church and State. No, it was a comprehensive, and an extensive system, which he meant to propose; to relinquish things certainly intended once as a security, which he thought, in some respects, ineffectual, and which were liable to additional objections, from the very circumstance of the object of the Union having been accomplished, and providing other security for the same objects, to have a more consistent and rational security, both in Church and State, according to the principle, but varying the mode, which the wisdom of our ancestors had adopted for the prevention of danger. The measure he intended to propose, he thought, would give more safety to the Church and State, as well as more satisfaction to all classes, and all descriptions, of the King's subjects, to take away that which no man would wish to remain, provided there could be perfect security without it.

Without that knowledge, which I have not found attainable, it is impossible to enter upon an argument, in order to prove the fallacy of Mr. Pitt's opinion upon this subject. But it may be permitted, in the absence of that knowledge, to express a strong doubt, that any measure which could be proposed, could give more safety to the Church and State, than the existing laws were calculated to ensure. And as to the removal of one test, merely to substitute another, (and it was certainly the intention of Mr. Pitt to adopt *some* test, in lieu of that which he meant to remove, or all the promised security would have been nugatory and illusive) it does not appear to be an object in which the hopes or wishes of the public could be much interested. The existing test was not confined to Papists and Dissenters, it extended alike to all the members of the

Established Church; and none of these had expressed a wish for its removal; consequently, its removal could afford no *satisfaction* to *them*. They were, indeed, perfectly satisfied with it as it stood; they wanted no change;—they did not wish to lose a certain benefit in the hope of gaining an uncertain advantage; to exchange one security which had the test of experience in its favour, for another which, however fair in speculation, was yet untried.

Although Mr. Pitt, from a laudable desire to prevent any false impressions on the public mind, had entered into this spontaneous explanation of his late conduct, he felt the necessity of denying the right of the House of Commons to require of any man to state his reasons for tendering his resignation to his Sovereign; nor, he observed, was it a common thing for the public to require it. A man very often, indeed, made his appeal to the public on going out of office, and that, sometimes, as much with a wish to be reinstated as any thing; but he never heard of a man being called to exculpate himself from the charge of resigning. But it had been said that, by their silence on the subject of the Catholic question, the late Ministers brought the name of their Sovereign into disrepute; and Mr. Grey had chosen to put a construction of his own on that silence, and then to ask a question, whether the Catholics had, or had not, been deceived? And, in reference to some paper, had said, that *innumerable* obstacles were in the way of the measure. Mr. Pitt expressed his belief, that the word was *insuperable*; though he could not be responsible for the verbal accuracy of any paper whatever. "Upon that subject," added Mr. Pitt, "all I will say is this, that, although I wished to submit the question of the Catholics to Parliament, there were such objections stated as made me feel it impossible, with propriety, to bring the measure forward as a Minister. These are the general words I choose to use upon the subject: the honourable gentleman shall draw from me no admissions, and no denials, on this transaction."

Recurring to the observations of Mr. Grey, respecting the name of the Sovereign being brought in question by the conduct of his Ministers, Mr. Pitt said that the Opposition appeared to be angry because he would not tell them whether they ought to be angry or not. They wondered

why he did not *make* it a matter of question, and they put distinctly some points in the way of question; but he would not answer interrogatories. He would, however, tell these gentlemen, that, on this subject, they deceived themselves grossly. Should they be able to establish, that the opinion of the Sovereign made it impossible to bring the subject forward, they would gain nothing by it; for, let the opinion of the Sovereign be what it might, or the opinion of his servants what it might, of the Sovereign to dispense with their services, or of the servant to tender his resignation, it would still remain the same. If the Opposition should but once succeed in shaking this principle, they would do more than they would be willing to avow towards the destruction of the Monarchy; they would establish the most extravagant part of an oligarchy that ever was erected in any State; for then, neither the Sovereign could dismiss, nor the subject resign, without an explanation being made to the public. So that the Sovereign, the father of his people, could never part from his servants, unless he condescended to shew they gave him bad advice; nor his servants tender their resignation, unless they could prove that something was attempted to be imposed upon them which they could not, in their consciences, approve. Was this, Mr. Pitt asked, the state, or was it desirable that it should be the state, of the Monarchy, in this country? Certainly it was not. The use of the name of the Sovereign, for the purpose of influencing opinions in that House, or in any deliberative assembly, was justly deemed unconstitutional.—The Sovereign exercised his opinion on the sentiments, as well as on the capacity, of his Ministers; and if, upon either, he judged them to be incompetent, or, in any degree, unfit, it was the prerogative, and, with perfect loyalty, let him add, also, the duty, of the Crown, to dismiss such Ministers. He must also be allowed to say, that if a Minister felt that, from a sense which he entertained of his duty, he ought to propose a measure, but was convinced that his endeavours must be ineffectual, so that his services must be limited to a narrower compass than he could desire, and that success, in some material points, was impossible, he ought to be permitted to retire; but, in proportion to the difficulty which the Sovereign might have in accepting the resignation of such a Minister, ought to be his love for such a Sovereign. Mr. Pitt hoped that he was not deficient in his duty to the best of Sovereigns; and he hoped the

whole ground and motive of his actions would continue to be justified during the whole of his reign. "This is all I shall say upon this subject, and it may, perhaps, be saying more than I ought."

With respect, however, to the assurances said, or supposed, to be held out to the Catholics of Ireland, Mr. Pitt deemed it proper to add a few words. The paper, circulated in that part of his Majesty's dominions, to which Mr. Grey had alluded, was a memorandum, sent in the name of the Marquis Cornwallis.* But, as this matter materially affects the

* The paper, or rather papers, (for there were two of them) to which Mr. Pitt here referred, were as follow:

"The leading part of his Majesty's Ministers, finding insurmountable obstacles to the bringing forward measures of concession to the Catholic body whilst in office, have felt it impossible to continue in administration under the inability to propose it with the circumstances necessary to carrying the measure with all its advantages; and they have retired from his Majesty's service, considering this line of conduct as most likely to contribute to its ultimate success; the Catholic body will, therefore, see how much their future hopes must depend upon strengthening their cause by good conduct; in the meantime, they will prudently consider their prospects as arising from the persons who may espouse their interests, and compare them with those which they may look to from any other quarter; they may, with confidence, rely on the support of all those who retire, *and of many who remain in office*, when it can be given with a prospect of success. They may be assured that Mr. PITT *will do his utmost to establish their cause in the public favour, and prepare the way for their finally attaining their objects*; and the Catholics will feel that, as Mr. Pitt could not concur in a hopeless attempt to force it now, he must, at all times, repress, with the same decision as if he held an adverse opinion, any unconstitutional conduct in the Catholic body.

"Under these circumstances it cannot be doubted, that the Catholics will take the most loyal, dutiful, and patient, line of conduct: that they will not suffer themselves to be led into measures, which can, by any construction, give a handle to the opposers of their wishes, either to misinterpret their principles, or to raise an argument for resisting their claims; but that, by their prudent and exemplary demeanour, they will afford additional grounds to the growing number of their advocates, to enforce their claims, on proper occasions, until their objects can be finally and advantageously attained.

"*The sentiments of a sincere friend, (the Marquis Cornwallis) to the Catholic claims:*

"If the Catholics should now proceed to violence, or entertain any ideas of obtaining their objects by convulsive measures, or forming associations with men of jacobinical principles, they must, of course, lose the support and aid of those who have sacrificed their own situations in

public character and conduct of Mr. Pitt, at the most critical period of his political life, it will be the fairest, and the surest, mode of preventing misconception, to deliver his sentiments in his own words.—" I know it to be true," he continued, " that the noble Lord did feel it right, as a matter of public duty, to make a communication to persons most immediately among the Catholics, and to state the motives which led to the late change which took place in his Majesty's Councils, in order to prevent any misrepresentation of that subject from then adding to the *danger of the public tranquillity*. I beg to state that matter clearly and distinctly; it was my express desire, not conveyed by myself, but through a noble friend of mind sitting near me, (Lord Castlereagh) that the noble Lord should take an opportunity of doing this. I do not arrogate any merit for it, but I think it is an answer to any charge against us upon this subject for remissness, that we lost no time in making that representation and explanation of our motives; and the principle of it was this, that the attempt to realize our wishes at this time would only be productive of public embarrassment. The representation was therefore made; but, with respect to the particular paper delivered, it was not previously consulted with me how it should be worded; and, therefore, for the particular phrases of it I do not hold myself responsible. All the knowledge I derived or conveyed was founded on verbal interpretation. As to the tenour of the paper I have alluded to, the sentiments in it are conformable to those which I have already expressed in this House, and shall again express, whenever I have occasion to deliver my sentiments on that subject; and it is fit, not only that this House should know them, but also that the community at large should know them. I mean this, that a measure of that sort appeared to me to be of much importance under all the circumstances; and that, being unable to bring it forward as a measure

their cause, but who would, at the same time, feel it to be their indispensable duty to oppose every thing tending to confusion.

" On the other hand, should the Catholics be sensible of the benefits they possess, by having so many characters of eminence *pledged not to embark in the service of government, except on the terms of the Catholic privileges being obtained*, it is to be hoped that, in balancing the advantages and disadvantages of their situation, they would prefer a quiet and peaceable demeanour to any line of conduct of an opposite description."

of government, I thought I could not, therefore, in honour, remain in the situation in which I then stood; and that I was desirous of letting it also be understood, that, whenever the objection I alluded to did not exist, the same obstacle did not interpose, every thing depending on me, as well as those who thought with me, I should do, for that I was desirous of carrying that measure, thinking it of great importance to the public at large; but that, in the mean time, if any attempt to press it, so as to endanger the public tranquillity, should be made, or any attempt to pervert the affection of any part of his Majesty's subjects, we should take our full share in resisting such attempts, and we should do so with firmness and resolution. These are the sentiments which I expressed, and I did hope that the day would come, when, on the part of the Catholics, should such a measure be revived, it would be carried in the only way in which I wished to see it carried, which was certainly conformable to the general tranquillity of the empire. As to any other pledge, I beg leave to give none—I have engaged myself to give none—I will give none either now or at any time. I have contributed, as far as peaceable endeavours could go, according to my judgment, in the best manner I could at the moment, for the general interests of the country.*

Mr. Pitt having thus fully explained his own motives and sentiments, on this important transaction, answered a question relating to his colleagues,—Whether any of those who had retired from office, had so pledged themselves to the Catholics as to be under the necessity of resigning their offices because they could not redeem their pledge? On this subject he said,—"I beg leave to deny that; and, what is more satisfactory, I believe I am authorized in denying that the Catholics conceived themselves to have received any such pledge."

After this candid explanation of his conduct, it is impossible to doubt, for a moment, that the *Catholic Question* was the ground of difference between the King and his Ministers, and the immediate cause of their

* Mr. Pitt's Speech, on March 25th, 1801, as published in the Collection of all his Speeches. Vol. IV. P. 188. 191.

resignation; it would be clear also from hence, if there were no other proof of the fact, that no pledge whatever was given by Mr. Pitt, or by any of his colleagues, to the Irish Papists. But the papers, circulated by Lord Cornwallis in Ireland, call for some observation, though, as Mr. Pitt confined his approbation of them to the *tenour*, and disclaimed all share in the wording them, it is difficult to say how far these observations may be applicable to his conduct. In the first place these papers bear the semblance of an appeal from the Throne to the people;—a measure which Mr. Pitt expressly reprobated and disclaimed; though, indeed, it has been said, that they were intended only to be communicated to the Prelates, and leading persons of the Romish Church, and not to be published.* But this precaution, if given, was totally disregarded; and one instance was added to many others, which might be adduced, of the little reliance to be placed on the delicacy or forbearance of Papists, on any subject in which their religious prejudices are nearly, or remotely, concerned.† In the next place, what necessity could there be for the King's confidential Ministers to justify their conduct to the *Irish Papists*, on a subject on which they had differed from their Sovereign, which, as they stated themselves, was "*of great importance to the empire at large;*" and, in regard to which, therefore, if any explanation were necessary, it was at least as much due to the Protestant majority, as to the Catholic minority, of his Majesty's subjects. And lastly, in almost every sentence of these papers, there is an evident dread displayed of some public commotions on the part of these very Papists, whose good conduct, and peaceable demeanour, had been stated as one of the conditions on which alone it would be proper or expedient to admit them to a full participation of political power. Exhortations to loyalty are evidently insulting to *loyal* men; and dissuasives from *turbulence* and *rebellion* can never be necessary to *quiet, orderly,* and *well-disposed* subjects. It would appear, then, from these papers, that the Ministers had been persuaded that, if their claims were not

* See Rivington's Annual Register for 1801. P. 76.

† The publication of Lord Redesdale's Letter to Lord Fingal, exhibits another memorable proof of the justice of this remark.

granted, the Papists would renew those horrible scenes which had so lately spread desolation over the Southern provinces of Ireland. It is a melancholy fact, that the Irish Papists, during the long period of seventy years, while all the penal laws were in force against them, were perfectly quiet and tranquil, but the moment the system of concession began to be adopted, they became clamorous and discontented; and, in proportion as indulgences have been lavished upon them, their clamours have increased; their supplications have become claims, and favours have been converted into rights. Be it remembered, however, that Mr. Pitt, though inconsiderately betrayed into an admission of the *expediency* of granting the few concessions which still remained to be granted, expressly denied the existence of any *right*, on their part, to claim such concessions.

But there is one part of the last of the two papers circulated in Ireland, which requires particular attention. It is there stated, in allusion to the Ministers who had resigned their places, that they were "*pledged not to embark in the service of government, except on the terms of the Catholic privileges being to be obtained.*" Here, then, was a *specific pledge*, not indeed, of the nature disclaimed by Mr. Pitt, that is, a pledge, given to the Irish Papists, as an inducement to assent to the measure of the Union, that Ministers would bring forward the question of *their privileges*; but a pledge of a still more serious, and a more alarming, nature,—a pledge to disregard any call which their Sovereign might make upon them, at any future time, for their public services, unless they could prescribe to him a condition which, they knew, was incompatible with his sense of duty, and repugnant to his conscience. In fact, it is difficult to reconcile such a pledge with the duty which a subject owes to his sovereign; it looks, indeed, very like an aristocratic confederacy formed against the Crown. And it is much to be questioned, whether any other Viceroy, than the pliant nobleman who then filled that station, could have been found to give the sanction of his authority to a paper containing a passage so radically objectionable, in every point of view. It must be remarked, however, that Mr. Pitt, in all his explanations on the subject, limits his reference to a *single paper*; and when this circumstance is coupled with his subsequent conduct, in

embarking in the service of government without any such terms as the pledge in question prescribed, it is fairly to be inferred, that he was no party to the pledge, and that it had neither his consent nor his approbation. The pledge was inconsistent with that duty and affection which he ever professed for his Sovereign; and if it were not absolutely *unconstitutional,* it differed very essentially from the customary modes of proceeding, in such cases; since there is a wide distinction between dissenting from a measure proposed to be adopted, of which a Minister disapproves, and for which he is responsible; and insisting on the adoption of a measure which the Sovereign disapproves. The one is an act to be *committed,* which may affect the Minister's character and safety; the other an *omission,* which can be productive of no such consequences. Besides, as far as an inference could be drawn from experience, in respect of the act prescribed in this instance, it was against the measure.

The papers, however, in question, admitting that they originated in the purest and most honourable intentions, (and independent of the pledge just noticed) could not be justified on the ground either of propriety or of duty. They, in a manner, identified Mr. Pitt and his colleagues with the Catholic party in Ireland, to the utter neglect of the loyal Protestants of that country, who, possessing thirty-nine fortieths of the property, and constituting, at least, one-third of the population, were most deeply interested in the question. Nor was this irregular proceeding consistent with that respect for the King which Mr. Pitt always professed, and always felt, and from which no consideration could have induced him *intentionally* to depart. The Ministers owed an account of their conduct, in the resignation of their offices, to their Sovereign alone; but, if they chose to enter into any explanation of their motives or views, it ought to have been directed to the nation at large, and not to any particular description of subjects, much less to that body, whose cause they considered themselves as having espoused in opposition to the King.

Though it be certain that this question was the efficient cause of Mr. Pitt's resignation, yet it is highly probable that there were other considerations floating in his mind at the time, which might have some influ-

ence in deciding his conduct. There is reason for believing that he differed from some of his colleagues on the important subject of peace; and, indeed, it may be inferred, from the part which he afterwards took in the discussions on the peace of Amiens, that he was disposed to make more sacrifices for the attainment of peace than other members of the Cabinet would have been inclined to accede to; and, had a schism prevailed in the Cabinet on such a question, Mr. Pitt might possibly have been left in a minority. There were various other points, too, of less importance, which combined to fix his determination to resign. But, whether one or all of these considerations influenced his resignation, it is certain that, in the adoption of that measure, he acted as he did upon every other occasion, most conscientiously. Had he listened, indeed, to the dictates of that honest ambition which made him aspire to power, only for the sake of rendering his country service; had he even been influenced by that chastened love of fame which sought for gratification only in the prosperity of his native land; had he suffered the voice of self-interest, which so often makes the balance preponderate, when doubt keeps it in suspense, to bias his conduct, he would have retained the reins of power, which he had so long, and so successfully, guided. His resignation damped all his hopes and all his prospects; it left the great object of his public life unaccomplished, his financial schemes incomplete. After he had been Prime Minister of Great Britain for the long term of seventeen years, he retired from office, much poorer than he entered it;—he retired with embarrassed circumstances, and impaired health. But his embarrassments proceeded not from extravagance, nor his indisposition from dissipation. With the affairs of the nation entrusted to his care, at one of the most critical periods of our history, his mind was, of necessity, too much engrossed by public business, to attend to domestic concerns; and it is not in the family of a Prime Minister that the most economical regulations are adopted, or that the absence of a master's eye is supplied by the vigilance of servants. When Mr. Pitt left office, he carried with him the esteem of his Sovereign, the affection of his colleagues, and the confidence of the country.

Lord Grenville obtained, on his resignation, in addition to some other sources of emolument during his own life, a pension during that of his

lady. Mr. Dundas was soon created a Peer by the title of Viscount Melville, and the East India Company settled on him, by an unanimous vote, an annuity of two thousand pounds. Lord Loughborough, besides the pension allotted to all Chancellors when they retire, was made Earl of Rosslyn, with a limitation of his title to his nephew. Mr. Pitt's services, however, were no otherwise rewarded, upon this occasion, than by the approving voice of his own conscience, and the honest plaudits of a grateful public. He received neither title nor pension, having no other place than that of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, of which he had been possessed many years. Neither did Lord Spencer nor Mr. Windham receive any mark of the royal favour.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Progress of the disputes with the Northern Powers—Embargo laid on all their ships in British harbours—The British Envoys recalled from their courts—Plans of the Confederates—Seizure of Hamburgh by the Danes—The King of Denmark a tool of Buonaparté—Hanover invaded by Prussia—A British fleet passes the Sound—Battle of Copenhagen—The King of Denmark abandons the Northern Confederacy—Assassination of the Russian Emperor, Paul—Accession of Alexander to the Throne of Russia—Peace with the Northern Powers—A British force lands in Egypt—Military operations in that country—Battle of the twenty-first of March, 1801—Defeat of the French—Death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie—General Hutchinson succeeds to the command of the army—Reduction of Grand Cairo—Capitulation of Alexandria—Final evacuation of Egypt by the French—News of this event first received at Paris—Negotiations for peace—Preliminaries signed in London—Conditions of the treaty—Lord Cornwallis sent to France—Definitive treaty signed at Amiens—The peace popular in England—Reflections on the consequences of the war—Failure of its principal objects—The war beneficial, on the whole, to Great Britain—Terms of peace highly favourable to France—Mr. Pitt defends the peace in Parliament—The Opposition approve it—Mr. Windham condemns it—His able delineation of the spirit of the French government—Difference of opinion, on the subject of peace, between Mr. Pitt and his friends, and the Members of the Portland-Party—Probable influence of that difference on Mr. Pitt's resignation—Debates on the peace-establishment—Mr. Pitt contends for the necessity of a powerful and extensive establishment—Mr. Fox defends the propriety of an ordinary establishment—Mr. Whitbread attacks the public character of Mr. Pitt—Is silenced by Mr. Pitt—Sir Francis Burdett makes a similar attack—Mr. Pitt defended by Lord Temple—Memorable speech of Mr. Archdall, on the same side—The Baronet's motion rejected by 246 votes against 39—Mr. John Nicholls moves a vote of thanks to the King for dismissing Ministers, whom his Majesty had *not* dismissed—Amendment moved by Lord Belgrave, converting the proposed vote of censure on the late Ministry into a vote of thanks—Opposed by Mr. Fox, Mr. Erskine, and Mr. Grey—Supported by Sir Henry Mildmay, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. S. Thornton—Sir Robert Peel's speech in praise of Mr. Pitt—Amendment carried by a great majority—Separate vote of thanks to Mr. Pitt, proposed by Sir Henry Mildmay, carried by 211 votes against 52—Commemoration of Mr. Pitt's Birth—Hostile disposition of Buonaparté—Extension of his power on the Continent—He complains of the licentiousness of the British Press—Betrays a gross ignorance of the Laws and Constitution of England—Judicious answer of Lord Hawkesbury to the complaints of the French Consul—Conciliatory disposition of the British Cabinet—Trial of

Peltier for a libel on Buonaparté—Animadversions on certain doctrines advanced on that trial—Insolent conduct of Buonaparté to Lord Whitworth, the British Ambassador—Dispute relating to the restoration of Malta—Aggressive projects of Buonaparté—Lord Whitworth recalled—War declared.

[1801-1802.] Mr. Pitt had now leisure to contemplate the progress and termination of those measures which had been adopted for the repression of insults, and the punishment of injuries, either sustained, or dreaded, by the Crown of Great Britain. All attempts to accommodate the disputes with the Northern Powers, by negotiation, having failed, recourse was, of necessity, had to the *lex ultima regum*. At the beginning of this year an embargo was laid on all Swedish, Danish, and Russian, ships, in retaliation of the hostile proceedings of the Confederated Powers. The British envoys, at the Northern courts, had instructions to inform the Sovereigns, to whom they were accredited, that the King, their master, would never submit to recognize the new naval principles, which were irreconcileable to those of public law, and which struck at the foundation, and maritime power, of his kingdom.—But no reasons, however cogent, no explanation, however satisfactory, could induce these powers to forego their hostile designs on British commerce, and on British power. And, therefore, preparations were made to send a powerful force into the Baltic, to effect, by arms, what could not be achieved by treaty. In order, however, to omit no possible means of averting the dire necessity of proceeding to extremities, the new Minister sent Mr. N. Vansittart, as Envoy Extraordinary, to the Court of Denmark; but so little did he find the Danish Cabinet disposed to recede from the hostile resolution which it had adopted, that he very soon withdrew; and, with him, Mr. Drummond, the British Minister in Ordinary, the Consul, and some other Englishmen, left Denmark.

The King of Denmark, indeed, had long made preparations for war, in which he was joined by the King of Prussia, and the plan was laid, by a junction of all the Northern fleets, to overpower the British, so as to effect their utter exclusion, not only from the Baltic, but from the whole trade of the North. This was the second cowardly attempt which these powers had made to injure Great Britain at a time, when,

in their estimation, harassed as she was by a long-protracted war, she would be unable to resist a confederacy, which they were disposed to consider as highly formidable. By an outrageous act of injustice, and a flagrant violation of those neutral rights, of which the Confederates professed themselves to be the chosen champions, Prince Charles, Landgrave of Hesse, took forcible possession of the independent city of Hamburgh, with 15,000 troops, and immediately compelled the Senate to lay an embargo on English merchandize. By this conduct the Danish Monarch proved himself a servile imitator of Buonaparté, who never scrupled to sacrifice every principle of justice, and to invade the most sacred rights, at the call of interest, or at the suggestion of revenge. The King of Prussia, on his part, resolved to keep his confederated brother in countenance, and, therefore, invaded the independent Electorate of Hanover, the neutrality of which he had solemnly guaranteed, and subjected the country to his own dominion.

During these proceedings, a British armament had assembled at Yarmouth, to the number of fifty-four sail, and having on board several regiments of marines and riflemen. This force sailed on the ninth of March, under the command of Sir Hyde Parker, who had with him Lord Nelson and Admiral Graves. The marines on board were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart. They passed the Sound, with little opposition, on the twenty-ninth of March, and anchored at a short distance from Copenhagen. The soundings having been ascertained, and buoys placed, the fleet was divided into two parts; Lord Nelson taking the command of twelve men of war, four frigates, as many sloops, and several bombs and fire-ships, while the remainder of the force continued with the Commander-in-Chief.—As Lord Nelson was to command the attack, he shifted his flag on board the Elephant.

The Danes had made every possible preparation for resistance; they had thirteen large ships of war, besides a variety of smaller vessels, and some very heavy batteries on the shore. The vessels were stationed with great judgment for the protection of the city; and the Danish officers and men were firmly resolved to defend the place to the last extremity.

On the morning of the second of April the British force was in motion. The intricacy of the navigation was such, (notwithstanding the adoption of every possible precaution to avert its dangers) that some of the ships were grounded, and others were prevented from taking their proper station in the line. These were great disadvantages to the assailants; but they did not prevent the Hero of the Nile from beginning the attack. For three hours the action was supported, with equal resolution, by the contending parties. The Danes had suffered most severely; the greater part of their ships were destroyed; most of them had struck their colours, after a desperate but ineffectual resistance; and the crown-battery alone remained to do any essential mischief to the British squadron. At this period of the conflict, Lord Nelson retired to his cabin, and wrote a note, addressed "to the Brothers of Englishmen, the Danes," informing them, that his instructions were to spare Denmark when no longer resisting; but that, if the firing on her part was continued, he must be obliged to burn the floating batteries which he had taken, without having it in his power to save the brave men who had defended them. An English boat was sent, with a flag of truce, to deliver this note to the principal Danish ship, now remaining, whence it was forwarded to the Crown Prince, who had taken an active part at the batteries on shore, during the whole engagement.

The Crown Prince, in order to ascertain the precise views of the British Admiral, in writing such a note, sent a Danish officer on board his ship, who was informed that, in making such a proposal, he had no other motive, but that which sprang from the wish to prevent any unnecessary effusion of blood; that he would, therefore, consent that hostilities should cease, and the wounded taken on shore; but the prisoners, in the prizes, he should retain, and dispose of the vessels as he thought proper. Having given this explanation, he requested the officer, Adjutant-General Ludholm, to present his humble duty to his Royal Highness, the Prince of Denmark, and to assure him, that he should consider this the greatest victory he had ever gained, if it should lead to a happy reconciliation between his own Most Gracious Sovereign, and his Majesty, the King of Denmark.

This message being favourably received, Nelson went on shore, and, being introduced, by the Crown Prince, to the King, whose capital was now exposed to the most imminent danger, he performed the most grateful part of his duty, by obtaining the Danish Monarch's consent to an armistice, which was afterwards followed by a treaty, by which Christian VII. undertook to abandon the hostile confederacy of the North, and to restore the friendly communication between the two countries which had subsisted before that confederacy was formed.

In this action the greater part of the Danish crews were either killed or wounded; the former were estimated, by the Danes themselves, at eighteen hundred. Seventeen of their vessels were taken, sunk, or destroyed; and all those which were captured were burned by the English, the next day, except the Holstein, which had been then built thirty years. The English lost two hundred and fifty-four killed, of whom twenty were officers, including Captains Riou and Mosse; and nine hundred and forty-three wounded, of whom forty-eight were officers.

While these operations were carrying on against Denmark, the Northern Confederacy received a still more fatal blow by the death of the Russian Emperor, Paul. This unhappy Monarch, whose strange and capricious conduct, during the latter years of his reign, exhibited evident symptoms of a disordered mind, was assassinated in his palace, on the night of the 23d of March. The conspiracy against his life was formed by some of his principal nobles, and the Zubows were the men who undertook to superintend its final execution. Such was the lamentable fate of a Monarch, who possessed many good natural endowments, and some qualities which, properly cultivated, at an early period of life, when the plastic mind of youth is equally susceptible of good and of bad impressions, might have led to happiness and fame. But his unnatural mother, who had consigned her husband to an untimely grave, shewed no more feeling for the son than she had displayed towards the father. By a miserable policy, the result of bad passions operating on a mind over which religion had little controul, and an ill-directed ambition, she exercised a despotic sway:—equally regardless of her son's happiness, and of the welfare of his future subjects, the haughty Catharine deprived Paul

of every advantage which education and society could afford, teaching him to be jealous from prudence, and suspicious from fear. Hence arose those strange inconsistencies which so glaringly marked his conduct, at different periods of his short reign. The nature of his power, which made his will law, and exempted him from all constitutional responsibility and controul, leaving no channel of communication open by which the sentiments of the people might be conveyed to the Throne, combined with his violent, unsteady, and capricious disposition, to produce the last tragic scene of his life;—no other means but assassination appearing practicable to remove the abuses which were sanctioned by royal authority, and to induce that total change of policy which was universally acknowledged to be equally necessary for the honour of the Crown, and the good of the community.

Paul was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander, who began his reign, by casting a veil over the death of his father, and by a voluntary pledge to make the laws and the will of his grandmother the guide of his policy, and the rule of his government. He abolished all the innovations which Paul had introduced, to the great disgust of the army, and to the material injury of commerce; and he ordered all the British sailors, who had been imprisoned by Paul, to be conveyed to the ports in which their ships were stationed.

The British fleet, after the affair of Copenhagen, repaired to Carlscrona, and the admiral called upon the Swedish government to renounce the Northern Confederacy. While the fleet lay here, news was received of the death of Paul, accompanied by proposals to Sir Hyde Parker, for an amicable termination of the disputes between Great Britain and the Northern Powers. Hostilities immediately ceased; Lord St. Helens was, soon after, sent to St. Petersburgh, as Minister Plenipotentiary; and, on the seventeenth of June, a convention was signed by Russia and Great Britain, to which Sweden and Denmark afterwards acceded, by which the principal conditions contended for by Great Britain were clearly established, and such restrictive regulations imposed on the right of search, as should prevent any arbitrary or unwarrantable exercise of that right on neutral ships.

So far the vigorous measures which had been prepared during Mr. Pitt's administration proved fully adequate to the objects which they were designed to accomplish. Measures of a similar nature, however, directed against the enemies of the country in another quarter of the globe, though ultimately successful, were doomed to experience a more serious and a more determined opposition. The force which had been assembled, in the preceding year, after the reduction of Malta, had repaired to Gibraltar, to recover from the inconveniences of a long cruise in a boisterous season. In December, 1800, they landed at Malta, whence they sailed, in two divisions, for Marmorice, in the hope and expectation of deriving material assistance from the Turks. They were deceived, however, in this respect; and, indeed, they laboured under such disadvantages, as had seldom been experienced by troops in a similar situation. They knew little or nothing of the country they were going to attack; they were possessed but of one map, and that most grossly incorrect; they had no other guide than Sir Sidney Smith, who was unacquainted with the interior of the country; they could derive no information but from Mr. Baldwin, who had been the British Consul at Alexandria;—and they were so ill-informed of the actual state of the enemy's force, that, at the highest computation, they estimated it only at 10,000 French, and 5,000 auxiliaries;—and this estimate even exceeded the number stated in the official information sent from England, on which the expedition was founded. In point of fact, the French force, at this time, amounted to no less than 32,180 men; while Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who commanded the expedition, had under him not more than 12,000 effective men.*

Notwithstanding the disparity of force, and so many other discouraging circumstances, the British Commander resolved to make the attempt, at least, to dislodge the French from Egypt. Aboukir Bay was the point chosen for landing the army, and, at two o'clock in the morning of the eighth of March, 1801, the first division, consisting of the reserve, under Major-General Moore, the brigade of guards, under Major-General Ludlow, and part of the first brigade, composed of the

* See the official returns of both armies, in Sir Robert Wilson's History of the Expedition.

Royals, the first battalion of the 54th, 200 of the second battalion, the whole amounting to about five thousand five hundred men, under the command of Major-General Coote, assembled in the boats, while the remainder of the first and second brigades were put into ships stationed close to the shore, to be ready to give speedy support to the troops that were to land first.

The boats were appointed to rendezvous near the Mondovi, which was anchored at about gun-shot distance from the shore. At three o'clock, the signal rocket was fired; and the boats moved onwards to the destined spot. But it was near nine o'clock before they could all collect and proceed, in regular order, to the shore. The right flank of the boats was protected by the Cruelle cutter, and the Dangereuse and Janissary gun-vessels; the left by the Entreprenant cutter, Malta schooner, and the Negresse gun-vessel; on each flank also were two armed launches of the fleet. The gallant hero of Acra, with a detachment of seamen, directed to co-operate with the army, had charge of the launches which contained the field artillery. The Tartan and Fury bomb-vessels were so placed as to cover the landing with their fire; and the Peterell, Camelion, and Minorca, were moored with their broadsides to the shore.

The shore formed the arch of a circle, the extremities of which, distant about three miles from each other, projected about one mile into the sea. And, as the ships were stationed just within this arch, the boats had a mile to go before they reached the shore. The land rose from the beach, forming a variety of sand-hills, and, in the centre, one much larger than the rest, rising to the height of sixty yards, and nearly perpendicular. It was a position peculiarly favourable for resisting a landing army; and, as the French had had ample notice of the approach of the English, they had spared no pains to increase its natural advantages, by troops and seamen, placed in situations which gave them the best command of the beach, and exposed themselves to the least possible danger. Indeed, so confident was the French Commander, Menou, that no serious attempt would be made to land here, that he sent only two thousand men to receive the English. This was a fatal blunder of his;

for, had he opposed their landing with fifteen or twenty thousand men, as he easily might have done, the enterprize would have been too hazardous to be undertaken, and too desperate to succeed.

About nine in the morning the signal was made for the boats to advance towards the shore. They sprang forward with amazing rapidity, at the same moment; and, as soon as the French had recovered from the astonishment which the intrepidity of the assailants had excited, they opened upon them a most dreadful fire, from twelve pieces of cannon stationed on the heights, and from the Castle of Aboukir, at one end of their line. Such was the quantity of shot and shells thrown from this commanding position, that the destruction of the whole division seemed inevitable; and, as the boats approached the shore, they were further exposed to a heavy fire of grape-shot and musquetry. The effect of these on the water has been compared, by an eye-witness, to the fall of a shower of hail. Yet, strange to say, only one boat received any material damage.

The reserve leaped out of the boats on the shore, and formed as they advanced; the 23d and 40th rushed up the principal sand-hill, without firing a shot, and drove the enemy from their post with the bayonet. They pursued them till they carried two nole-hills in the rear, which commanded the plain to the left. They were followed by the 42d regiment, who also ascended the height, notwithstanding the fire from two pieces of cannon, and a battalion of infantry;—when they reached the summit, they sustained a charge from two hundred French dragoons, whom they soon compelled to retire with precipitation. These dragoons, however, rallied behind the sand-hills, and, attacking the guards, as they were landing on the beach, threw them into momentary confusion; but the timely approach of the 50th regiment, which was already formed on their right, checked the enemy, and gave time for the guards to present a front, when the enemy were again repulsed with considerable loss. At the very moment when the 54th and Royals landed, a column of six hundred infantry was advancing, with fixed bayonets, against the left flank of the guards; but as soon as they perceived those regiments, they fired a volley and retreated.

In about an hour and a half the French were driven from every position with the loss of three hundred men, eight pieces of cannon, and many horses. The boats immediately returned for the remainder of the troops, and, by the great exertions of the navy, the whole army was landed by the evening. In this affair the English had six hundred and fifty-five men killed, wounded, and missing; of whom one hundred and two only were slain.

The British army continuing to advance, attacked the French, who had taken up a formidable position on the road to Alexandria. This action, which lasted several hours, was fought on the thirteenth of March. The English suffered severely by the enemy's decided superiority in cavalry and artillery; and, after sustaining a destructive fire, under multiplied disadvantages, during the greater part of the day, the General did not think it prudent to persist in his intention to force the heights on which the enemy were posted; and, therefore, ordered the army to return to the position which they occupied in the morning.

It was in this position that the British army sustained and repelled the memorable attack of the twenty-first of March. The preceding evening, Sir Sidney Smith received a letter from an Arab Chief, apprizing him of the arrival of General Menou, at Alexandria, with a powerful force, and of his intention to attack the English the next morning. The Commander in Chief, wholly unacquainted with the disposition and character of these Arabs, gave no credit to the friendly communication, notwithstanding the avowed confidence which the gallant and intelligent officer, to whom it was addressed, and who was best able to appreciate such intelligence, reposed in it. The attack began on the right of the British lines, at half past three in the morning, and continued till ten, when Menou, finding every effort to carry the British position unavailing, ordered his men to retire. The loss of the French, on this day, was estimated at four thousand men, about one-fourth of whom were killed. The English had two hundred and thirty-five officers and men killed, twelve hundred and fifty wounded, and two and thirty missing. Among the wounded were General Moore, Brigadier-Generals Hope, Oakes, and Lawson, and Sir Sidney Smith. Sir Ralph Abercrombie also received

a mortal wound, by a musquet-ball, in the thigh, early in the day, which he concealed from the army till the period for exertion was past, when his strength failed him, he was carried off the field, and conveyed on board the Admiral's ship, where he died on the twenty-eighth of March. His death was universally, and most deservedly, lamented;—for his mind was stored with every great and good quality, and his heart was the seat of every virtue.

The French General, Roiz, was among the killed.—The Standard of the Legion to which Buonaparté, with his usual arrogance and folly, had given the appellation of *Invincible*, was taken by ANTHONY LUTZ, a private in the Minorca Regiment, which took an active and distinguished part in the business of the day. The action, on the part of the British, was, exclusively, confined to the right wing, which did not consist of more than six thousand men, and which defeated nearly double the number of the enemy, whose whole force, with the exception of eight hundred, was directed against them. On the death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, the command devolved on General Hutchinson.

It was, for some time, a matter of doubt with the new Commander, whether he should lay siege to Alexandria; or proceed further into the country, and, after forming a junction with the Turkish army, which was hastening to join him, by the way of Syria, endeavour to reduce Grand Cairo, and to cut off all communication between the French on the coast, and every part of the interior. After duly weighing every circumstance, and, particularly, the inadequacy of his force to form the siege of Alexandria, he wisely resolved to adopt the latter plan of operations.

The junction between the English and Turkish armies was effected at the beginning of June; and, on the fifteenth of that month, General Hutchinson wrote to General Belliard, who commanded at Cairo, calling upon him to prevent a needless effusion of blood, and offering him the most honourable terms to induce him to surrender the place. This the French Commander peremptorily refused, and, in order to inspirit his men at the approach of the English, ordered a *feu de joie* to be fired, by

the garrison, *for the capture of Ireland.** Belliard, however, had no serious intention of defending the place; he knew the incompetency of his army to guard such extensive fortifications; he was aware, that the inhabitants were, to a man, hostile to the French; and he was sensible that his own troops desired nothing so ardently as to return to Europe. He, therefore, prudently, sent a flag of truce to the English camp, and, after a long conference, a capitulation was signed, on the twenty-seventh of June, by which the French engaged to evacuate Cairo on being allowed to return, with their arms, to Europe. This capitulation was carried into effect on the tenth of the following month, when the English and Turks took possession of the city, and both their flags were hoisted on the citadel. The total amount of persons included in the capitulation amounted to upwards of *fourteen thousand*; exclusive of women and children; and the military alone, including five hundred men who deserted to the Mamelukes, after the capitulation, amounted to fourteen thousand one hundred and seventy-two.†

General Hutchinson, having received some reinforcements from England, in the month of July, which swelled his army to sixteen thousand men, resolved to commence the siege of Alexandria. The approaches to the town were made under circumstances highly honourable to the valour and good conduct of the besieging army, who drove the enemy from post to post, till the French Commander, Menou, finding no prospect of relief from Europe, and no hopes of ultimate success from further resistance, agreed, on the first day of September, to surrender the place on condition of being sent to Europe. The whole force, in Alexandria, at the period of this capitulation, was ten thousand five hundred and twenty-eight men; the last of which sailed from the harbour on the eighteenth of September. Thus, with a force apparently so inadequate to the accomplishment of the task which they were sent to perform, did the British army wrest this important country from their enemies, and restore it to their allies.

* Wilson's History of the British Expedition to Egypt, &c. p. 124.

† Ibid. p. 173.

Intelligence of the final conquest of Egypt by the English reached Paris, before the British Cabinet could be apprized of it, through an inconsiderate permission, granted by General Hutchinson to the French Commander, to dispatch a swift-sailing vessel to apprize his government of the event, the moment the capitulation was signed. It is too much, perhaps, to expect the General and the politician to be united in the same person; but, without meaning to impute culpable negligence to the British General, it is impossible not to lament, that he did not take special care, in the critical state in which Europe was then placed, that his own government should be first apprized of an event, of which the interest of their country required that they should receive the earliest possible information. In consequence of the knowledge thus obtained, the First Consul of France derived an important advantage, in a treaty of peace which he hastily concluded with the Turks, and which contained many provisions highly favourable to the French, who had grossly violated every agreement which they had entered into with the Porte, and who had even invaded her territory in time of peace,—and greatly prejudicial to the English, who, from the important assistance which they had rendered to the Turks, and from their honourable and disinterested conduct towards them, on all occasions, were entitled to every return which justice, generosity, and gratitude, could suggest or confer. The evacuation of Egypt (the Turkish Ambassador not knowing that it had actually taken place) was the consideration held out by the French, for the benefits which they claimed, and the privileges which they acquired, by this new treaty.

It was the more necessary to impart information of this importance to the British Ministers, with all practicable expedition, as they were engaged in a negotiation for peace with the French, and, had the expulsion of the enemy from Egypt been known to them, it is fair to suppose, that they would have insisted upon terms more favourable than those which they actually obtained. The negotiation was carried on in London, between Lord Hawkesbury, on the one hand, and Louis William Otto, who had been some time resident in this country, as a Commissary for the exchange of prisoners, on the other; the former, by a departure from the established rules of diplomatic etiquette, having

consented to reduce himself to a level with a private citizen of France. It had continued during the whole of the summer of 1801; and, in its progress, many impediments arose, and some curious discussions took place, relative to the Liberty of the Press in this country, which the Corsican Consul was fearful might be employed to delineate the hideous features of his own character, in the colours of truth. With every disposition to concede, as far as possible, the British Ministers made a firm stand at this point, and Lord Hawkesbury resisted strongly and resolutely, every attempt to encroach on that freedom of discussion, to which much of the excellence of the British Constitution may fairly be ascribed. At length, the Cabinet of Paris, having received Menou's dispatches from Egypt, hastened the conclusion of the business; and, on the first of October, the preliminaries were signed by Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Otto, and the event was immediately communicated to the public through the accustomed channels. By this treaty Great Britain restored to France and her allies every possession or colony taken from them during the war, with the exception of the Spanish Island of Trinidad, and the Dutch settlement at Ceylon. The Cape of Good Hope was to become a free port; and Malta was to be restored to the Order, but under the express guarantee and protection of a third power, to be fixed upon in the definitive treaty. In order to bring that treaty to a speedy conclusion, Lord Cornwallis was dispatched to France; Amiens was the scene of negotiation, appointed by the First Consul; and his brother, Joseph Buonaparté, received full power to treat with the British Plenipotentiary. In the course of the discussion which ensued, France, with her usual artifice, started fresh difficulties, and preferred fresh demands; which occasioned so much delay, that it was supposed by many that war would be renewed. On the twenty-fifth of March, however, matters were finally arranged, and the seal was put to the treaty of Amiens; which differed but little from the preliminaries of London. Malta was to be garrisoned by Neapolitan troops, till such time as the Knights could form a sufficient force themselves, for the defence of the Island, the independence of which was to be secured by France, Great Britain, Austria, Spain, Russia, and Prussia.

Thus ended the revolutionary war, in the defeat of all the hopes and

expectations whi had been formed, of indemnity for the past, and of security for the fu re; and, in the accomplishment of all those gigantic plans of subversio and conquest, which had been conceived by the first founders of th French Republic; and pursued, with unremitting activity, by all her ccessive rulers. By the peace of Amiens, a great part of the continent f Europe was laid prostrate at the feet of France; and French influence mained predominant from the German ocean to the Bay of Naples. In short, Jacobinism triumphed; her "child and champion" established is ascendancy;—her firmest advocates were honoured and rewarded; and the stamp of success was given to her boldest projects. Not on of the objects which the Princes originally confederated against Franc professed to have in view, was attained. On the contrary, her power was extended, her territories were enlarged, her influence was increased, and her principles had surmounted every obstacle opposed to their pr gress. Her government, it is true, had assumed a new form, less terrific in appearance than the murderous system of Robespierre and his sanguinary associates, but more despotic in reality. A military despotism, formed out of the elements of Jacobinism, destroyed every vestige of civil liberty, and imposed the most galling and odious fetters on the minds, as well as the persons, of the people.

England, indeed, had escaped the yoke to which the powers on the continent had, in a greater or less degree, submitted. She had secured her constitution and her government from the effects of that revolutionary poison which had destroyed so many ancient institutions, and which had subverted so many Thrones. She had even enlarged her dominions, by the acquisition of an important settlement in Asia, which afforded her the long sought-for advantage of a safe and commodious harbour for her fleets in the Eastern Ocean; and by an island in the West Indies, of consequence more from its relative situation to the Spanish main, than from its produce or probable revenue. She had also kept inviolate her faith with her allies, and had preserved her national character pure amidst surrounding corruption. Here ends the catalogue of her advantages. In every other point she had completely failed. None of the objects which she had pursued in common with the other powers of

Europe, had she been able to attain. Her failure, indeed, was not owing to any defect either of wisdom in her councils, or of vigour in her efforts. She had bounteously opened her treasures to those who fought for the preservation of social order, against revolutionary anarchy:—she had made every exertion which her undaunted spirit could suggest, and her ample resources command. And, had her allies but displayed equal wisdom, resolution, and vigour, their united efforts must have been crowned with success.

The terms of this treaty were certainly not such as the relative state of the contending parties could justify. If France were mistress of the continent, England was queen of the ocean. If the latter could make no impression on the continental territory of her enemy, she was invulnerable, at all points, by his attacks. She commanded the commerce of the world; she had taken the principal colonial possessions of France and her vassals, and had wrested from them every resource but what arose from the interior of their respective countries. They could not dispute with her the empire of the sea; they could not attack any portion of her dominions; and, with a reduced military establishment, she might have maintained, at a comparatively little expence, which her monopoly of trade would amply supply, a contracted system of naval warfare, which would secure to her the possession of all the advantages which she actually enjoyed, and enable her to aggravate the distress of her enemies, to destroy their commerce, to diminish their revenue, and to cripple their resources of every kind. Thus circumstanced, she might, and ought to, have commanded much more advantageous terms of peace: in addition to Ceylon and Trinidad, she should have insisted on retaining the Cape of Good Hope, and on the unconditional retention of the Sovereignty of Malta. But the inordinate desire for peace, displayed by the new Ministers, and the weakness of their Plenipotentiary, gave an advantage to the French, in the negotiation, of which they skillfully availed themselves. Hence it was, that, by the treaty of peace, while France was suffered to retain all the conquests which she had made, England submitted to restore every place which she had taken from France. And, by this conduct, the British Cabinet gave a

kind of sanction to the monstrous principle of *indivisibility* which the revolutionary legislators of Paris had the audacity to promulgate.

Peace, however, has something so alluring in her aspect, that not only the unthinking multitude, but men of philanthropic feelings, and good intentions, are apt to rush into her embraces, without any previous examination of her principles, and without attention to the mischievous poison which sometimes insidiously lurks beneath her charms. Thus, the preliminaries were received by the public with every demonstration of unbridled joy; and the reflecting few, who, looking beyond the superfices of things, and feeling, perhaps too acutely, for the honour and dignity of their country, refused to join in the general delirium, experienced the usual marks of popular resentment. The public satisfaction was increased by the conclusion of the definitive treaty, and the people indulged themselves with delusive dreams of permanent tranquillity, and with a confidence of enjoying all the blessings which peace, abstractedly considered, is calculated to afford.

In Parliament, the preliminary treaty was defended by Mr. Pitt, who, though he thought better terms ought to have been obtained, preferred the acceptance of the conditions which had been procured, to a further continuance of the war. In his speech on this subject, (Nov. 8th, 1801) he acknowledged that the restoration of the Monarchy of France would have been more consistent with the wishes of himself and his colleagues, and with the interest and security of the country, than any other state of things; but they had never insisted on such restoration as the *sine quâ non* of peace. The great object of the war was defence for ourselves and for the rest of the world, in a war waged against most of the nations of Europe, but against us with particular malignity. Security was our great object; there were different means of accomplishing it, with better or worse prospects of success; and, according to the different variations of policy occasioned by a change of circumstances, we still pursued our great object, security.

Mr. Pitt confessed, at the same time, that he gave up his hopes of restoring the ancient Monarchy of France with the greatest reluctance;

and he should, to his dying day, lament that there were not, on the part of the other powers of Europe, efforts corresponding to our own, for the accomplishment of that great work; there were periods, during the continuance of the war, in which he had hopes of our being able to put together the scattered fragments of that great and venerable edifice; to restore the exiled nobility of France; to re-establish a government, certainly not free from defects, but built upon sober and regular foundations, in the stead of that mad system of innovation which threatened, and had nearly accomplished, the destruction of Europe.

Me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam
Auspiciis; et sponte meâ componere curas;
Urbem Trojanam primùm dulcesque meorum
Reliquias colerem, Priami facta alta manerent,
Et recidiva manu posuissem Pergama victis.

This, it was true, had been found unattainable; but we had the satisfaction of knowing, that we had survived the violence of the revolutionary fever, and we had seen the extent of its principles abated,—we had seen Jacobinism deprived of its fascination; we had seen it stripped of the name and pretext of liberty; it had shewn itself to be capable only of destroying, not of building, and that it must necessarily end in a military despotism. Mr. Pitt trusted, that this important lesson would not be thrown away upon the world. Disappointed in our hopes of being able to drive France within her ancient limits, and even to raise barriers against her farther incursions, it became necessary, with the change of circumstances to change our objects; for he did not know a more fatal error, than to look only at one object, and obstinately to pursue it, when the hope of accomplishing it no longer remained. If it became impossible for us to obtain the full object of our wishes, wisdom and policy both required that we should endeavour to obtain that which was next best. In saying this, he was not sensible of inconsistency, in his former language or conduct, in refusing to treat with the person who now held the destinies of France; because, when he formerly declined treating with him, he expressly said, that, if events should take the turn which they had since taken, he should have no objection to treat with him.

Mr. Fox, and his friends, approved the peace, on very different grounds from those on which Mr. Pitt's approbation was founded; thinking the war to be just, holy, and unavoidable, on the part of France, he was of opinion, that the peace ought to be advantageous to her; and, indeed, he did not blush, at one of those public meetings, at which he delivered his sentiments with somewhat less reserve than he displayed in the House of Commons, explicitly to declare, that he approved the peace, *because* it was honourable and glorious to *France!!!*—Happily for Great Britain, this is a solitary instance, in her annals, in which party-spirit had so far subdued every sense of duty, every feeling of patriotism, and every principle of honour, as to make the degradation of his country, and the glory of her enemy, a matter of exultation, and a subject of applause, to a British Statesman!

The peace, however, was strongly condemned by Mr. Windham, who truly represented it as an armed truce, entered upon without necessity, negotiated without wisdom, and concluded without honour. He considered it as productive of no one advantage to the country, but as pregnant with ruin. He drew a masterly picture of the actual state of France, and ridiculed the idea, that Buonaparté, having established an absolute monarchy, in his own person, would become the most determined enemy of that Jacobinism to which he was indebted for the dignity which he enjoyed, and the power which he exercised. Mr. Windham admitted, that Buonaparté, like other demagogues, and *friends of the people*, having deluded and gulled the people sufficiently to make them answer his purpose, would be ready enough to teach them a different lesson, and to forbid the use of that language towards himself, which he had before taught them as perfectly proper towards others. Never was any one, to be sure, who used less management in that respect, or who left all the admirers of the French Revolution, within and without, all who admired it as a system of liberty, in a more whimsical and laughable situation. Every opinion for which they had been contending was now completely trodden down, and trampled upon, or held out in France to the greatest possible contempt and derision. The members of Opposition, Mr. Windham remarked, had really great reason to complain of having been so completely left in the lurch. There was not even a

decent retreat provided for them. But, though such was the treatment which the principles of "The Rights of Man," and of the "Holy Duty of Insurrection," met with in France, and on the part of him who should have been their natural protector, it was by no means the same with respect to the encouragement which he might choose to afford them in other countries. Though they used none of these goods in France for home consumption, they had always a large assortment by them, ready for foreign markets. Their Jacobin orators were not to be looked for in the clubs at Paris, but in the clubs of London. There they might talk of cashiering Kings, and use other language of a similar import; but should any orator, more flippant than the rest, choose to hold forth in that strain, in the city where the Great Consul resided, in the metropolis of liberty, he would soon put him to silence in the way adopted in the sign of *the good Woman*. Buonaparté being invested, in virtue of the Rights of Man, with despotic power, could afford to sanction the promulgation of those doctrines in other countries of which he would not suffer the least whisper in his own. While he was at the head of an absolute monarchy in France, he might be the promoter and champion of Jacobin insurrection any where else. The object, as well as wicked nature, of Jacobinism in England, which, while it would rebel against the lawful authority of its own government, was willing to enslave itself to France, found no difficulty in allowing to him these two opposite characters; and Mr. Windham knew no reason why the House should suppose him disinclined to accept them.

This was a correct delineation of the spirit of the French government, and was well calculated to expose the strange misconception of those who thought, and who maintained, that, because Buonaparté had assumed kingly rank, and regal power, he would not suffer the same means to be used for subverting the thrones of his enemies, as those which he had adopted for the destruction of that of his lawful Sovereign; and for raising his friends, in other countries, to the same eminence which he enjoyed himself, so as to establish his influence beyond the limits of his personal power. To suppose that there was any magical charm in the instrument signed at Amiens, that would make the Consul abandon every principle which he had publicly consecrated, and forego

every design which he had secretly cherished; that would produce, in short, a radical change in his mind and conduct, and work a moral and political regeneration, so as to convert a cruel, atrocious assassin, into a mild and virtuous Sovereign, was to admit a supposition which credulity alone could sanction, and which common sense must reject.

It was remarkable, in these discussions, that the peace was supported by Mr. Pitt, and most of his personal friends, while it was opposed by nearly all the members of the Portland party, who had joined his administration, soon after the commencement of the war.—The head of that party, indeed, the Duke of Portland himself, joined the New Ministry, and concurred with them in their opinions of the peace; while, on the other hand, Lord Grenville, and his family, united with Mr. Windham, and the other opponents of the measure. This circumstance strengthens the belief that Mr. Pitt had the present period in view, when he suffered the Catholic question to induce him to abandon his post.—For, had his administration continued, it is clear, that a serious difference in the Cabinet must have occurred, and it is a matter of doubt whether, on a division, Mr. Pitt would not have been left in a minority. And a consideration of this nature was sufficient to fix his resolution, if, in point of fact, he had any doubts on his mind as to the propriety of his resignation, on the ground of the Catholic claims.

A farther difference occurred, between the several parties, in the House of Commons, respecting the establishment necessary to be maintained, after the conclusion of peace. By those who considered the peace as nothing more than an *armed truce*, as it was characterized by Mr. Windham; or as a *hollow armed truce*, as it was described by a member of the New Ministry, Mr. Charles Yorke; or even by those who, like Mr. Pitt, were more sanguine in their expectations of its continuance, but who were, at the same time, highly jealous and mistrustful of the French government, it was contended that the establishment should be unusually large, and, in some degree commensurate with the danger to which the nation would be exposed. While, on the other hand, those who thought, with Mr. Fox, that the French, when left to themselves, were a harmless, inoffensive people, incapable of injury or

injustice to a neighbouring state, and only stimulated to acts of hostility by wanton and unprovoked aggression, insisted on the propriety and necessity of an *ordinary* peace-establishment. In all these questions, the Ministry, supported by Mr. Pitt, carried with them a decisive majority in Parliament; and had, undoubtedly, the voice of the public on their side.

The part which Mr. Pitt now took, in Parliament, on all public questions, was precisely that which every independent and conscientious representative of the people ought to take.—He connected himself with no party; he joined neither the Minister nor the Opposition; he considered every question, submitted to discussion, on the ground of its own merits, that is, in its tendency to forward the public service, and to promote the public welfare. If he thought a measure conducive to the object which it professed to have in view, and found that object to be laudable, he did not stop to inquire by *whom* it was introduced, but carefully examined its various parts; and if, after such investigation, he found the measure defective, he honestly endeavoured, by the exertion of his talents and experience, to supply the defects to the best of his judgment; if it appeared to him wise and good, he gave it his unqualified and cordial support; and, if he judged it to be radically defective, he opposed it with firmness and decision. Such was the line of conduct which he pursued, with undeviating rectitude, at this new æra of his political life. The Ministers were, on various occasions, indebted to his advice, still more than to his parliamentary vote. And had the Premier continued to pay it that attention which it so richly deserved; had he not formed a false estimate of his own power, influence, and resources; had he not imputed to positive desert, that strength which arose from a combination of fortuitous circumstances, his political career might have been greatly protracted, and Mr. Pitt's last days might have been passed remote from the turmoils of office, and the bustle of a court.

On the fifth of April, 1802, when the Minister opened the Budget for the year, Mr. Whitbread embraced the opportunity of attacking Mr. Pitt's system of finance, by expressing his exultation at the supposed desertion of it by his successor, from the circumstance of his having

recourse to a loan of twenty-five millions. Mr. Pitt, however, resolved, that no misrepresentation respecting any part of his public conduct, however weakly urged, should pass without an answer, stooped to silence this feeble assailant, whose impotent blows thus recoiled upon himself.

In the following week (April 12th) another attack was made, not merely on the public character of Mr. Pitt, but on his whole system of policy, and on all the measures of his administration, by Sir Francis Burdett, who concluded a long and tedious philippic, in which he enumerated every ground of objection which had been urged, and rejected by the House, for the last twelve years, with a motion for a Committee of Inquiry. He was answered by Lord Temple and Mr. Archdall. The last of these gentlemen, after delineating, in strong and just colours, the prominent features of Mr. Pitt's administration, and alluding to the generosity manifested to foreigners, added, " Let other nations, when they think of this, tell the Honourable Baronet what is now the English character abroad. And let this united nation, when it looks back to the contrast,—on the one hand, their Ministry calling forth the virtues of the country, and placing them in unison with those of the Sovereign;—on the other, a selfish and disaffected party, in their Jacobin uniform of thread-bare sophistry, and patch-work declamation, who once were troublesome, and might have become formidable, in the course of this war of principle, as well as power, had they not been defeated by arguments, as well as by facts, and, at last, driven into obscurity with the indignation of the public;—let this be recollected, and the Honourable Baronet have the pleasure, and the pride, to tell what is now the English character at home." Mr. Archdall then pronounced a strong panegyric on the personal character of Mr. Pitt, and having referred, in illustration of his positions, to various parts of his public conduct, he concluded with this pointed remark:—" If, after this, some one should come forward to criminate his merits in the Parliament which had witnessed them, even he would presume to speak what Mr. Pitt need not condescend to speak for himself;—that to this House it would be enough to say, as his illustrious father said before him, ' *You know*

these hands are clean,' and to his accuser it would not be too much to say,—

> " Disce, puer, Virtutem ex me, verumque laborem,
> " Fortunam ex aliis ——"

The question was met by a direct negative, which was supported by two hundred and forty-six members, while thirty-nine only countenanced the motion.

Uninstructed by this example, Mr. John Nicholls made a similar attempt on a subsequent day, (the 7th of May) when he moved a vote of thanks to his Majesty for having *removed* the Right Honourable William Pitt from his councils. The awkward construction of this gentleman's mind appears to have betrayed him into the commission of perpetual blunders.—As on a former occasion, he attempted to support his argument by a precedent which made directly against it, so, on the present, he proposed to thank his Sovereign for an act which he had never performed. The King did not remove Mr. Pitt from his councils, but Mr. Pitt, as has been seen, removed himself. The issue of this curious motion was such as might have been expected, by any one but the person who made it. The vote of censure was converted into a vote of approbation; and the motion ended in a generous acknowledgement of the services of him whose good name it was intended to tarnish.

The amendment, in the first instance, was moved by Lord Belgrave, in the following words:—" It is the opinion of this House, that, by the wisdom, energy, and firmness, of his Majesty's councils during the late arduous contest, supported by the unparalleled exertions of our fleets and armies, and by the magnanimity and fortitude of the people, the honour of this country has been upheld, its strength united and consolidated, its credit and commerce maintained and extended, and our invaluable constitution preserved, against the attacks of foreign and domestic enemies." It was not to be supposed that an amendment of this nature would pass without animadversion or resistance, from that party, in the House, who had uniformly opposed all the measures of Mr. Pitt's admi-

nistration. It was not left to the impotent efforts of the insignificant mover of the original question to oppose it. The whole phalanx of Opposition united on the occasion; Mr. Grey, Mr. Erskine, and Mr. Fox, spoke long, and vehemently, against it. On the other hand, the amendment was strenuously and ably supported by the young nobleman who moved it, by Sir Henry Mildmay, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Samuel Thornton, and Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert, a commercial man himself, bore testimony to the unrivalled knowledge of Mr. Pitt in the commercial concerns of the country. His disinterestedness, he maintained, was as conspicuous as his knowledge, for he had been the benefactor of his country, and had neglected no one's interest but his own. "It has, indeed, been said," pursued Sir Robert, "that, though he did not enrich himself, he secured his influence by bestowing pensions and titles on others. But he had no occasion to have recourse to such arts; he had secured sufficient support by honourable measures; three parts of the House, who were incapable of being bribed, were his friends." Sir Robert was of opinion, that the House ought to bestow on Mr. Pitt some more solid mark of approbation than a vote of thanks; and that it would be a disgrace to the nation to allow such a man to retire to languish in poverty. "I, for one," said the Baronet, "would be happy to contribute to prevent this; not from any personal motives, for I have not the honour of being acquainted with the Right Honourable Gentleman, but on account of the great and important services which he has rendered his country."

These independent tributes of justice, from opulent individuals, who spoke the real sentiments of their minds, careless whom they might please, or whom offend, could not fail to be highly grateful to the honest patriot, who felt that he deserved them. The amendment was farther supported by his successors in office, and, notwithstanding all the efforts of Opposition, was carried by a decisive majority of more than four to one. The same success attended a motion which immediately followed this decision, proposed by Sir Harry Mildmay, for a vote of express and separate thanks to Mr. Pitt;—two hundred and eleven voted for it, and fifty-two against it.

These attacks on the character of Mr. Pitt tended only to call forth a more open display of attachment, on the part of his friends. On the twenty-eighth of May, a festival was held at Merchant-Taylors' Hall, in commemoration of his birth.—And it has been truly observed,—" On no similar occasion was ever witnessed so large a concourse of men, eminent in rank, station, and talent; and never was such a celebration distinguished by so much genuine enthusiasm."

[1803.] While Mr. Pitt was thus rising in the estimation of his countrymen, the feverish peace, or rather the uncertain truce, which had been concluded at Amiens, was rapidly drawing to a close. It was, indeed, easily perceived, by those intelligent Englishmen, who had recently visited France, that nothing was farther from the wish and disposition of Buonaparté than to maintain a state of real peace and cordial harmony with Great Britain. He never could forgive the noble opposition which she had made to the revolutionary power of France; he considered the freedom of her constitution as a libel on the galling despotism which he had established in his new Empire; and the liberty of her press, through the medium of which the most bitter truths were conveyed to his irritable mind, was a source of constant disquiet, and of incessant complaint, to one whose conscience acknowledged that his crimes set the powers of exaggeration at defiance. In rapid progress he had risen to the summit of supreme power, and a trembling people had recently conferred on him the Consulate for life. But the extent of his authority at home only served to render him more impatient of contradiction abroad; and, as he had succeeded in subduing, by military terror, all opposition in his own territories, he had the presumption to imagine that he could as easily silence the voice of reproach in foreign countries. The success, indeed, which had attended all his nefarious attempts, in the different states of the Continent, seemed to justify this opinion, all preposterous as, in fact, it was. He had brought his negotiations in Germany, consequent on the peace of Luneville, to a successful termination; and, having rendered Russia and Prussia the simple tools of his power, made his will the law; plundering, at his pleasure, the ecclesiastical Princes of the Empire, to indemnify those whose territories he had seized on the French side of the Rhine; and taking special care to

reward, most amply, those wretched potentates who had displayed the most cowardly subserviency to his interests, and the most base treachery to their lawful chief. Among these, the petty Sovereigns of Bavaria, Baden, and Wurtemburgh, were raised, by him, to the dignity of Electors, as preparatory to their subsequent elevation to the rank of Kings. He had been equally successful in reviving the ancient jealousy between the Prussian Monarch and the Emperor of Germany. The former of these Sovereigns, with a littleness of soul, an imbecility of mind, and a miserable want of foresight, while intent on the humiliation of a rival no longer formidable, and on the pursuit of petty schemes of personal aggrandizement, enlarged the influence and power of an implacable enemy, and prepared the way for his own destruction! In Italy, also, Buonaparté had assumed the Sovereignty, under the denomination of President of the Italian Republic, for such was the title now assumed by the Cisalpine Republic. He had united the Kingdom of Sardinia and the Duchy of Parma to France; and he had taken effectual means for rivetting the chains of Switzerland.

Possessed of power so extensive, and inflated by success so unexpected, Buonaparté was little solicitous to afford proofs of a pacific disposition to the only enemy who had resisted his efforts with effect. In fact, the stand which England alone had made against his towering ambition, had severely galled his pride, and increased the inveteracy of his hatred. The idea, that she should presume to question his omnipotence, while the trembling powers of the Continent submitted their necks to his yoke, was intolerable to a mind which acknowledged no honourable principle of action, which was inaccessible to every laudable sentiment, which regarded all competition as an intolerable presumption, and opposition to his will as an unpardonable crime.

With this disposition the Corsican Consul betrayed, in all his communications with the British Cabinet, an overbearing and insupportable pride. First to Mr. Otto, and afterwards to his Ambassador, General Andreossy, he sent instructions to complain of the freedom of those animadversions, which the public writers of Great Britain passed on his character and conduct—And those complaints were reiterated as well

by Talleyrand, as by the First Consul himself, to Lord Whitworth, who, in November, 1802, had repaired to Paris as Ambassador to the French Court. In all the communications which took place on this subject, Buonaparté betrayed not only a petulance of temper utterly incompatible with the new character which he had to support, and a profound ignorance of the laws and constitution of this country. He could not be persuaded, that the British Government were unable to exercise, over the press, the same unlimited power, the same boundless tyranny, which he himself exercised over every public writer, throughout his vast dominions. With him it was literally, Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione VOLUNTAS;—his sword enforced obedience to every mandate which his wayward disposition prompted him to issue. It was impossible, then, to make him understand that, in England, the Ministers were subject to the same legal restraints as the lowest subject of the realm; that they could proceed only according to the forms of law; and that, if what the law deemed a *libel* should be uttered, or written, against the first potentate in Europe, he must, in order to punish the offender, have recourse to the same modes of proceeding which are prescribed to Englishmen themselves, under similar circumstances. Reasoning of this kind was lost upon a man who acknowledged no law but his own will, and who daily doomed his subjects to banishment or death, in virtue of his own assumed authority, without trial, and without the observance of any legal form.—Every attempt to procure new laws for imposing additional restraints on the press having, as might have been anticipated, proved fruitless, and the First Consul remaining unconvinced by the forcible and judicious observations of Lord Hawkesbury,* a constant state of irritation and ill-will continued to prevail between the two countries.

* The communication here alluded to is Lord Hawkesbury's letter to Mr. Merry, dated August twenty-eighth, 1802. In this his Lordship observes, "I am sure you must be aware that his Majesty cannot, and never will, in consequence of any representation, or any measure, from a foreign power, make any concession which can be in the smallest degree dangerous to the liberty of the press, as secured by the constitution of this country. This liberty is justly dear to every British subject. The constitution admits of no previous restraints upon publications of every description; but there exist judicatures, wholly independent of the Executive Government, capable of taking cognizance of such publications as the law deems to be criminal, and which *are bound to inflict the punishments* (which) *the delinquents may deserve*, these

From general complaints, the great Consul descended to *particulars*; and, in the autumn of 1802, he directed his Agent, Otto, to prefer complaints against certain English public writers, and against Peltier, who conducted a Journal, in the French language, entitled, *L'Ambigu*. Although, as Lord Hawkesbury had pertinently observed, in his instructions to Mr. Merry, who was then at Paris, the French press poured forth constant libels against the English government; libels, too, authorised by the French Cabinet; although Rheinhardt, the jacobin representative of Buonaparté, at Hamburgh, had violated the neutrality of the Senate, and had *compelled* them to insert a most virulent attack upon the English government, in the Hamburgh paper; although Buonaparté, himself, had publicly uttered similar libels; and although, to use the words of Lord Hawkesbury, "it might, indeed, with truth, be asserted, that the period which had elapsed since the conclusion of the definitive treaty had been marked with *one continued series of aggression, violence*, and *insult, on the part of the French government*;*—so ardent was the desire of the British Ministers to gratify the Corsican, and so averse were they from the adoption of any line of conduct which could have even a tendency to produce a renewal of hostilities between the two countries, that they instructed the Attorney-General to file a criminal

judicatures may take cognizance, not only of libels against the government and the magistracy of this kingdom, but, *as has been repeatedly experienced*, of publications defamatory of those in whose hands the administration of foreign governments is placed. That our government neither has, nor wants, any other protection than that which the laws of the country afford; and though they are willing, and ready, to give to every foreign government all the protection against offences of this nature, which the principle of their laws and constitution will admit, they never can consent to new-model their laws, or to change their constitution, to gratify the wishes of any foreign power." This language was dignified, and becoming the Minister of a British Monarch. But his Lordship was inaccurate, I conceive, in his statement respecting *repeated* prosecutions for libels on foreigners. I recollect but two instances of this kind:—the trial of Lord George Gordon, for a libel on the Queen of France; and that of Vint, for a libel on the Emperor of Russia. Lord Hawkesbury very properly reminded the First Consul, that he might prevent the circulation of any foreign libels in his own country; and that he might have recourse to the laws to punish any writers who might publish libels on him in England.

* See the declaration of May 18, 1803.

information against Peltier, in compliance with the demand of Buonaparté, preferred through the medium of *Otto*.* The cause was tried before Lord Ellenborough, on the twenty-first of February, 1803; and, in the course of that trial, such principles were advanced, in support of the prosecution, both from the bar and the bench, as, were they to be received as the law of the land, would effectually annihilate the liberty of the press, and impose eternal silence on the historic muse! It was stated as a crime "to bring Napoleone Buonaparté into great hatred and contempt among the liege subjects of our Lord the King."† If, indeed, this be a crime, I am myself a criminal, for, assuredly, the facts which I have detailed, respecting Napoleone Buonaparté, in the course of this history, have a direct tendency to bring him "into great hatred and contempt among the liege subjects of our Lord the King."‡ But it is with concern I observe, that the whole prosecution was marked by that strong political prejudice, which, wherever it occurs, pollutes the pure current of public justice.§ The defendant was convicted, but the renewal of hostilities was allowed, inconsistently enough, to secure him from punishment! The First Consul was less complaisant; and not one of the numerous libels which appeared in France against the British government was made the subject of prosecution or of punishment. Indeed, they could not well be so made, since they were all published under the express sanction of the First Consul himself.

* See Otto's most impudent letters to Lord Hawkesbury, of July 25th, and August 17th, 1802.

† See the printed Trial of Peltier.

‡ If this be really a *crime*, it must be a crime at all times, as well in war as in peace; besides, the case was argued, on the part of the Crown, as a question not of *policy* but of *principle*, and principle does not vary with times and circumstances. Yet, as the war intervened, the defendant, though convicted, was never brought up for judgment!

§ The Chief Justice remarked, in his charge to the jury, who were a special jury, chiefly of mercantile men; "Gentlemen, I trust your verdict will strengthen the relations by which the interests of this country are connected with France." Such a remark, upon such an occasion, requires no comment to point its tendency, or to characterize its nature. Indeed, the whole of this charge was such as, I trust, will never be repeated in a British court of justice.

At the very time when this extraordinary trial was pending, the difference between the two governments was such as to render hostilities unavoidable. At the latter end of February, Lord Whitworth had a personal interview with Buonaparté, in which the latter so far forgot himself, or, rather, so far sunk his assumed, in his *real*, character, as personally to insult the British Ambassador, and to threaten his government, in the presence of other diplomatic characters. On this occasion he openly avowed his ambitious designs, clearly developed his views upon Egypt, (which, indeed, had been fully explained in a report previously made by his agent, Sebastiani, who had been sent, in a military capacity, to that country) boldly justified his unprincipled usurpations in Switzerland, Piedmont, and Italy, and peremptorily insisted on the immediate evacuation of Malta, as the *sine quâ non* of continued peace.

By the treaty of Amiens the King had stipulated to restore, within a given time, the island of Malta to the Order of St. John, under the express guarantee of its independence and neutrality by the principal powers of Europe. Circumstances, however, tending to destroy the independence of the Order itself, by depriving it of a considerable portion of its revenue, had subsequently arisen, which rendered it highly imprudent to carry that article of the treaty into effect. Besides, the stipulation had been made with a reference to the relative situation of the contracting parties at the time of concluding the treaty. That situation had experienced a material change, by the fresh acquisitions of territory which Buonaparté had afterwards made, and by the consequent addition of power which he had secured. The Corsican's intentions, too, to dismember the Turkish empire, and to monopolize the commerce of the Levant, objects against which specific provisions were made in the Treaty, were too notorious not to call for measures of adequate precaution on the part of Great Britain. The British Ministers, indeed, were to blame only for having carried a system of conciliation and concession to a greater length than was compatible with the dignity of the national character. It was easy to perceive, from the very beginning of the peace, that such a system would have no other effect on the mind of Buonaparté, than to increase its insolence and presumption. And, to say the truth, he had more reason than would be generally admitted, to

infer, from what had been borne, what would be borne; though the inference proved unjust, from his ignorance of the real character of the English nation. At last, the inutility of every attempt to make the irritable and perverse Corsican recede from the fixed purpose of his mind, and to listen to the claims of justice, became so obvious, that the British Ambassador received orders to return to England. He accordingly left Paris, on the twelfth of May, 1803, and, on the eighteenth of that month, the declaration of the British Cabinet was published.—Thus, after a peace of little more than thirteen months, from the conclusion of the treaty of Amiens,—if that can be called a peace which brought with it no friendly disposition, no symptom of returning amity, no suspension even of aggressive measures, on the part of France,—the nation found itself, by the obstinate temper and insatiable ambition of a low-born usurper, once more exposed to all the dangers of protracted warfare, and the public were compelled to acknowledge the wisdom and foresight of those statesmen and writers, who had early warned them to place no reliance on the continuance of a state of abstinence from hostility, which depended entirely on the will of an individual who subjected his passions to no controul, and who confined his hatred within no bounds.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Fallacy of Mr. Addington's hopes of the permanence of the Peace of Amiens—Motives of Mr. Pitt's approbation of the Peace—He supports the Ministers on the renewal of hostilities—Different opinions respecting the War—Examination of the arguments on that subject—Mr. Pitt's Speech on the War—He enforces the necessity of vigorous measures as the only efficient means of defeating the designs of the enemy—Deprecates the adoption of a weak and timid system of policy—The Ministers neglect to follow his advice—Different qualifications necessary for a SPEAKER and a PREMIER, a *Naval Commander*, and a *First Lord of the Admiralty*—Colonel Patten's motion of censure—Mr. Pitt moves the previous question—His conduct on this occasion blamed by both parties—Justification of that conduct, and of the principles by which he was uniformly actuated, when out of place—His Speech on the means of national defence—Reproves Ministers for their inefficiency—Moves for papers, with a view to Inquiry into the criminal neglect of the Admiralty—Proves the existence of a torpid inactivity in that Board—His motion opposed by Ministers—Mr. Sheridan accuses him of "factious and party motives;" and pronounces a panegyric on Lord St. Vincent—Instances of gross ignorance and imprudence in the Board of Admiralty—Mr. Sheridan compares Lord St. Vincent with the late Lord Chatham—Injustice and folly of the comparison shown—Mr. Pitt extols the naval character of Lord St. Vincent—His reply to Mr. Sheridan—He proves the reduced state of the Navy since the Peace of Amiens—His motion rejected by the House—Weakness of Mr. Addington's Administration becomes more and more evident—The Premier makes overtures to Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt refuses to come into power without his former Colleagues—Mr. Addington refusing to admit Lord Grenville into the Cabinet, the negotiation is broken off—Change of conduct in Mr. Addington after this fruitless attempt—Mr. Fox's motion on the military state of the nation—Supported by Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt differs from Mr. Fox on the power of the King to call his subjects to arms in the case of invasion—Thoughts on this subject—Mr. Fox's motion rejected by a majority of fifty-two—Another debate on the same subject—Majority in favour of the Minister only thirty-seven—Mr. Addington resigns—The King commands Mr. Pitt to form a new Ministry—The Grenville party refuse to come into power without Mr. Fox—Mr. Pitt presses his Majesty to admit Mr. Fox into the Cabinet, but is unable to remove his Majesty's objections—Letter from Lord Grenville to Mr. Pitt—Examination of the arguments urged in that Letter—The King's objection investigated, and proved to be valid—Reflections on the conduct of Lord Grenville—Probable consequences of a Cabinet formed on the *latitudinarian* principle advanced by his Lordship—The new Ministry—State of the country on Mr. Pitt's return to power—State of the Continent—Murder of

the Duke D'Enghien—It excites great disgust in France—Spirited remonstrance of Russia and Sweden on the subject—Base conduct of Prussia, and of the Princes of Germany—Buonaparté assumes the title of Emperor of the French—Cowardice of the Pope in crowning the murderer of the Duke D'Enghien—Military measures proposed by Mr. Pitt—Discussions in the House of Commons—The Ministers' plan carried by a small majority—Mr. Sheridan's Speech—Declares party-contentions to be objects of greater importance than the means of national defence—Mr. Grey obtains a majority in the House of Commons by a party manœuvre—Mr. Stanhope pronounces such conduct to be "disgraceful and contemptible"—Inconsistency of the Speaker—Mr. Sheridan *disinterestedly* calls on Mr. Pitt to resign—Mr. Pitt refuses to obey the call, and pledges himself to retain his place—Retrospective view of Irish affairs—Insurrection of the twenty-third of July, 1803—Committee of Papists in Dublin—Meeting of the Corporation of Dublin—Resolutions passed against the Catholic Petition—Reflections on the conduct of the Viceroy in dismissing Mr. John Giffard, for moving these resolutions—War with Spain—Debates on the subject in the House of Commons—Mr. Pitt's Speech—He proposes resolutions approving the conduct of Ministers, which are carried by three hundred and three votes against one hundred and six—Mr. Sheridan's motion for the repeal of the additional Force Act—Mr. Pitt answers him—False statement of Mr. Sheridan corrected—His motion lost—Petition of the Irish Papists for Emancipation——Intended to harass the Minister—Speech of Lord Limerick in the House of Lords—His Lordship asserts, that the Papists were goaded on by the English Opposition to present their Petition—Mr. Fox supports the Petition in the Commons—Is most ably answered by Dr. Duigenan—Mr. Grattan's Speech—Animadversions on the doctrine of Dr. Milner, a Papist Prelate, quoted, and approved, by Dr. Lawrence—Mr. Pitt opposes the motion—Acknowledges the influence of the Romish Priests in exciting rebellion in Ireland—Suggests the propriety of making such Priests stipendiaries of the state—Declares the sense of the nation to be decidedly against the prayer of the Petition—Sir George Hill reprobates the Petition as "a mere party-trick"—Motion rejected by three hundred and thirty-six votes against one hundred and twenty-four—Mr. Whitbread's motion against Mr. Pitt for advancing money to Boyd and Benfield—Negatived by the House—Lord Melville exposes the misconduct of the Admiralty in the House of Lords—Proceedings against his Lordship in the Commons—Impeachment of his Lordship—His acquittal by the Peers—Reflections on this proceeding; particularly on the conduct of the House of Commons, in condemning his Lordship without hearing him in his own defence, and in punishing him before he was tried—Examination of the constitutional powers of the House on judicial questions—Honourable conduct of Mr. Pitt on this occasion—Propriety of the Speaker's vote questioned—Mr. Addington created Viscount Sidmouth, and made Lord President of the Council—He demands of Mr. Pitt the office of First Lord of the Admiralty for his friend, Lord Buckinghamshire—Mr. Pitt refuses, and Lords Sidmouth and Buckinghamshire send in their resignation—On reflection they recal this hasty step—They again resign their places, and their resignations are accepted—Declining state of Mr. Pitt's health—Continental affairs—Wise and vigorous policy of Russia—Buonaparté crowned King of Italy—Renewal of hostilities in Germany—Surrender of Ulm—Battle of Austerlitz—Peace of Presburgh—Naval victory off Trafalgar—Death of Lord Nelson—Brilliant

Administration of Marquis Wellesley in the East—Mr. Pitt repairs to Bath—Returns to Putney—His last illness—His death and character—Public honours paid to his memory—The House of Commons pass a vote for the payment of his debts.

[1803-1804.] The renewal of hostilities, after so short an interval of tranquillity, exposed the fallacy of those hopes, and the weakness of those expectations, which the new Ministers, and their literary partisans, had fondly cherished, and sedulously diffused, respecting the permanence of the peace of Amiens. Mr. Addington had even flattered himself, that, in calculating its probable duration, he might assign it as long an existence as any peace concluded in the last century.* It is matter of surprize, indeed, that any one who had attended to the invariable principles of the revolutionary government of France, to the public conduct of its successive rulers, and to the sentiments and disposition uniformly displayed by the man who had recently usurped the sovereignty of that unhappy country, could, for one moment, have drawn a conclusion so utterly destitute of foundation in the premises whence it was deduced. But the Premier was unwilling to dispel, in his own head, the *delirium* which he had excited in the heads of the great majority of the people. The peace was his darling child; it was, at once, the end and the reward of his ambition; it was the idol at whose shrine he bowed, with blind and superstitious reverence; it was the basis of his popularity; the great specimen of his political wisdom; his paramount claim to pre-eminence of patriotism; the foundation of his fame; the theme of his admiration; the object of his daily contemplation; the constant food of his self-approving mind.† The rude hand of the Corsican, however, had

* See Mr. Addington's Speech, on May 14, 1802; and his Memoirs, p. 206.

† The boisterous eloquence of Lord Ellenborough, who, in the course of debate, not unfrequently laboured to atone for weakness of argument, by violence of gesture, was employed, with forensic pertinacity, to defend every part and principle of the treaty of Amiens. And, so zealous an advocate was his Lordship, in behalf of his ministerial clients, that he found subject for congratulation in a flagrant departure from the forms of treaty invariably pursued by our ancestors. At the commencement of all former treaties, the different treaties which had bound together the separate members of the great commonwealth of Europe, had been specifically renewed and confirmed, in order to give greater security to the new bond of amity. It

abruptly dispelled this strange delusion; and the Minister had now to contend with difficulties of a far different description, and which required the exertion of far different talents, from those which presented themselves at the conferences at Amiens.

Mr. Pitt, who had thought the peace an experiment necessary to be made, and who was persuaded that, unless it were tried, the nation at large would never be brought to discredit the groundless assertions of that factious party, which had incessantly represented the war as equally useless, unnecessary, and unjust; and had uniformly insisted on the pacific disposition of the French government; and, consequently, that they would never give that full, cordial, and unanimous support to the prosecution of the war, which is, at all times, desirable, and which is often necessary to ensure success to the efforts of the government,—now stood forward, on the renewal of hostilities, to give to Ministers the same manly and independent support, which he had hitherto afforded to all such of their measures as he could conscientiously approve.

In the discussions which took place in Parliament, upon this subject, those members, who had opposed the peace, proved the most conspicuous and determined opponents of the principle on which the war was renewed. But they narrowed the question too much, by contending, that the refusal to surrender Malta was the sole cause of renewed hostilities. It must, indeed, be admitted, that the grounds on which the Ministers, and their supporters, defended the peace, justified, in some degree, this contracted view of the subject. It had been stated, by the author of the Memoirs of Mr. Addington, whose sentiments were assuredly approved by the Ministers, that the war being a war of conservation, not of aggrandizement; a war defensive, to secure ourselves;

remained, however, for the acute penetration of this forensic statesman, to discover the folly of our ancestors, in this respect; and for his sagacity, to exult "in the annihilation of all *that useless trash* which was contained in fourteen or fifteen treaties; and which, if they had been renewed, would have militated against every rule of reason and common sense. As to the revival of treaties, noble Lords might as well talk of reviving the condition of mankind in some very remote period!"

not offensive, to injure others; the conditions of the peace corresponded with the professed objects for which, at first, we had entered into the conflict; for, by these, we maintained our constitution unimpaired; our territories undiminished; our national honour untarnished. Besides these advantages, we had gained two valuable islands, and a large tract of country in the East Indies. It was farther contended, "that, as the British empire, now left alone, had no object for which to contend, with any prospect of success, the protracting of war would be but to waste treasure, to shed blood, and to exhaust strength, for no useful purpose whatever; an act this, of political imprudence, if not of moral wickedness, when the war could be terminated on conditions of peace, fair, equitable, salutary, and honourable;"* and such the Ministers insisted the conditions of the peace of Amiens were. If this were a true state of the case, the arguments of those who opposed the grounds on which the war was renewed would be irresistible. For, certain it is, that had the Ministers surrendered Malta, peace might have been prolonged, at least, for a short time. And, if "we had no object for which to contend with any prospect of success," at the period when the treaty of Amiens was signed; and if, by that treaty, we had secured the professed objects of the war; if the aggrandizement of France were really, as it was contended, not an object of sufficient consequence to justify a continuance of the contest; and if, as was also maintained, all the objections to the surrender of Malta were unreasonable; our object having been "to rescue it from foreign domination, not to capture it as a common spoil of war," and, therefore, it would be unjust to retain it; if all this were admitted, as it was by Ministers, the renewal of the war could not be defended. For no act of France, subsequent to the definitive treaty, could make such an alteration in the state of Europe, as, consistently with the principles thus laid down, could be of sufficient consequence to justify the British government in departing from that pacific system which had led to, and followed, this treaty. Besides, if there were no prospect of success in contending with France for any object of national importance, at the period in question, certainly that prospect was not at all brightened by the ministerial operations during the short interval of

* Brief Memoirs of Mr. Addington's Administration, &c. p. 168.

peace. A very large portion of our army had been disbanded; the greater part of our fleets dismantled; our naval arsenals nearly exhausted; and, from a miserable system of mistaken economy, no care had been taken to replenish our naval stores with such articles as were indispensably necessary for the equipment of a large fleet, at the commencement of a war. The Ministers, then, had much the worst of the argument, on this point.

But, taking up the argument in another point of view, and without any reference to the dicta of Ministers, the renewal of hostilities was as much an act of necessity as the original war in 1793. For, although France had taken several steps to increase her power, between the period of the preliminary treaty and that of the definitive treaty, yet still she had made further strides towards the unlimited extension of her dominion and influence, which fully justified a government, actuated by becoming principles of national dignity, and of national security, principles more noble and expansive than those on which the peace of Amiens was formed, in declaring war against her. The relative situation of the two countries had experienced, by the aggressive acts of Buonaparté, a material change; and it was manifest to the world, that his policy was directed to the attainment of such an ascendancy in Europe, as would enable him to prescribe laws to surrounding nations, and to contend successfully with the only power which had set his threats at defiance. Here was a legitimate ground of war; such a ground as had induced our ancestors, both Whigs and Tories, to fly to arms on various occasions, in order to chastise the insolence, to repress the ambition, and to check the career, of their natural enemy. Farther acts of aggression, too, had been committed by Buonaparté, in sending agents to Egypt, and to different parts of the British territory, *avowedly*, for *commercial* purposes; (though most of them were *military* men) but, in fact, for no other purpose than that of taking correct accounts of all those matters and objects which a power, wishing to conquer a country, and to reduce it under its own dominion, would be solicitous to obtain.

It was on these grounds that Mr. Pitt defended the justice and necessity of the new war, in Parliament; of the merits and nature of which

he took a luminous view, when it became a subject of discussion, in the House of Commons, on the twentieth of May, 1803. He then expressed his conviction, that some system, far more vigorous and effectual than any which had yet been adopted, would be found necessary, both in our finance, and in the preparation for national defence. On the provisions to be made for these two primary and paramount objects, it would principally depend, in his estimation, whether we could effectually disconcert the favourite projects, and disappoint the main hopes, of our enemies. It was evident that, if they indulged themselves in any expectation of success in the present contest, it was built chiefly on the supposition that they could either break the spirit, and shake the determination, of the country, by harassing us with the perpetual apprehension of descent upon our coasts, or that they could impair our resources, and undermine our credit, by the effects of an expensive and protracted contest. To defeat the first of these purposes, it was not, in his judgment, sufficient to make those naval and military preparations, which would prevent any invasion that might be attempted, from being ultimately successful; (an event which, he trusted, he was justified, in common with others, in considering as utterly impossible) but to make such vigorous and extensive arrangements for national defence as might diffuse a sense of the most complete security against even the temporary impression to be produced by such an attempt, and might enable every individual to lay down his head in rest, in the persuasion and confidence that nothing was omitted which could enable us at once to meet and repel the danger, at any moment, and in any quarter, in which it might threaten us.

In order to defeat the second object, that of wearing out our resources, Mr. Pitt trusted the House would, from the beginning, form a system of finance, not with a view only to the expence which might be necessary in the first year of the contest, but that they would look, at once, to the possibility of its being protracted to as long a period as that which had been lately terminated—that they would consider fully what, on the probable scale of the war, would be the whole extent of the burthens necessary to be imposed, on that supposition. He was persuaded that it could only be by providing, at the outset, means adequate to the whole extent of these purposes, that we could, in fact, prevent the ultimate

amount of our expences from being unnecessarily, and, perhaps, intolerably, augmented; or that we could ensure the best chances, either of bringing the contest to a speedy conclusion, by convincing the enemy of our ability to maintain it, or could meet its continued exigencies, if necessary, without the annual recurrence of growing and accumulated embarrassments. He trusted, therefore, that Ministers would feel the necessity of bringing both these points under consideration, with all practicable promptitude and dispatch; and that, if possible, not even a fortnight might be suffered to elapse, without enabling Parliament to adopt such measures as would convince both France and the world, that we had, from that hour, provided the means of supporting the force, and of defraying the expenditure, which might be necessary for the maintenance of our internal security, and for the vigorous and effectual prosecution of the war, to any period to which it could be reasonably expected to extend. He was aware that these measures could not be effected without material and extensive personal sacrifices, and without great additional burthens, which must, in a certain degree, affect the ease, convenience, and even comfort, of many classes of society. He lamented these consequences as much as any man; and, if he saw any prospect that, by present concession, we could obtain a real and desirable interval of peace, security, and repose, he should be as anxious as any man to avoid the necessity of such arduous and painful exertions; but under the present circumstances, a weak and timid policy would, perhaps, scarcely even postpone the moment when they would become indispensable for our existence, and would, infallibly, expose us to the certainty of a similar struggle, at no distant period, without those means which we now possessed, and with a diminished chance of finally conducting it to a successful issue. At that moment we had not an option between the blessings of peace and the dangers of war. From the fatality of the times, and the general state of the world, Mr. Pitt observed, we must consider our lot as cast by the decrees of Providence, in a time of peril and trouble. He trusted, the temper and the courage of the nation would be conformable to the duties which such a situation imposed, that we should be prepared, collectively and individually, to meet it with that resignation and fortitude, and, at the same time, with that active zeal and exertion, which, in proportion to the magnitude of

the crisis, might be expected from a brave and free people; and that we should remember, even in the hour of trial, what abundant reason we had to be grateful to Providence for the distinction which we enjoyed over most of the countries of Europe, and for all the advantages and blessings which national wisdom and virtue had hitherto produced, and which it now depended on perseverance in the same just and honourable sentiments, still to guard and preserve.

It had been well for the Ministers had they followed this able, manly, and judicious advice; but it very soon appeared, that they were but ill qualified for guiding the helm of state, in such a stormy and tempestuous season; and the nation became convinced, that the solemn and stately tone and demeanour, the sterile knowledge of parliamentary forms, and that superficial information respecting common constitutional points, that may be collected from any of our elementary law books, which suffice to qualify a man for the discharge of the monotonous and laborious duties of Speaker to the House of Commons, are by no means adequate to constitute an able Minister of State. Nor were they more slow to acknowledge the difference between the talents necessary to make a good commander of a fleet and the abilities requisite to form an efficient First Lord of the Admiralty.

In the month of June, 1803, Colonel Patten brought forward a formal motion of censure on the Ministers, comprised in five resolutions, which, substantially, charged them with having deceived the nation, and betrayed the interests of the country, by holding out hopes of continued peace, at the very time when, according to their subsequent declarations, they knew that France was pursuing an unvaried course of aggression, violence, and insult. As a proof of their incapacity, and criminal inattention to their duty, it was stated, in one of these resolutions, that, on the sixteenth of October, 1802, counter-orders were dispatched by Ministers, revoking the orders before given for the surrender of the Cape of Good Hope, and of the other conquests made by England during the late war; and that the final orders, in consequence of which that settlement was actually evacuated, were issued on the sixteenth of November, when the hostile spirit of France had (as afterwards avowed

by Ministers) been manifested for more than six months, by one continued series of aggression, violence, and insult, for which neither reparation nor redress had, to that moment, been obtained; that the offensive principle had already been distinctly advanced, of excluding his Majesty from all concerns in the affairs of the Continent; that the Spanish and other Priories had already been withdrawn from the Order of Malta; Piedmont, Parma, Piacenza, and Elba, had been annexed to France; Switzerland had been attacked and subjugated; and the remonstrance of his Majesty's government upon that subject had been treated with indignity and contempt; the territory of the Batavian Republic was, at that very moment, still occupied by the armies of the Chief Consul of France, and its internal administration still controlled by his interposition; and the French government was then actually engaged in the pursuit of those plans and measures for the subversion of the Turkish empire to which his Majesty's declaration referred, as a violation of the treaty of peace; that, in directing, under such circumstances, the final surrender of the Cape, without having previously explained or arranged the numerous points of difference and complaint which then actually subsisted between the two governments, his Majesty's Ministers acted in contradiction to the sense which they had themselves manifested of their own duty, and had, improvidently, exposed to danger some of the most important interests of his Majesty's dominions.

Mr. Pitt, in considering this question, differed from both sides of the House; for, on the one hand, he did not think that sufficient proof of the alleged misconduct had been made out to justify the charges preferred, in the resolutions, in their full extent, and, therefore, he could not vote for them; and, on the other, the justification offered by Ministers did not satisfy him that their conduct was exempt from blame; and, therefore, he could not vote for a direct negative on the resolutions, which would be tantamount to a denial of all ground of censure. For this reason he moved that the other orders of the day should be read. Though it is perfectly clear, that in his view of the subject, he could not conscientiously adopt any other mode of proceeding, he was, nevertheless, blamed for his conduct by both parties. The Ministers thought, that, as he could not concur with their opponents, he ought to have

voted with them; and the Opposition conceived that, as he could not justify the whole conduct of the Ministers, he ought to have joined in their vote of censure. But Mr. Pitt was of no party; and, consequently, his conduct was not influenced by party motives. He did not consider whether the effect of his vote might tend to secure Ministers in their seats, or to drive them out of them. The real merits of the question were alone allowed to bias his judgment, and to influence his vote. He, indeed, expressly declared, that his esteem for many members of the administration should not prevent him from the strict discharge of his duty, and from concurring in an Address to the Throne for their removal from office, if the papers upon the table afforded evidence of their incapacity, misconduct, or criminality. But, as they did not, in his opinion, supply such evidence, it would have been a gross deviation from moral rectitude, and political honesty, to vote for a motion founded on the supposition that they did supply it. On the other hand, if he thought that Ministers had not acted with sufficient caution, vigilance, and firmness, he could not, without a sacrifice of conscience, concur in a vote which went to exempt them from all imputation of blame. In short, his conduct upon this, as upon all important occasions, was that of an honest, upright, independent Member of Parliament. As in administration, so "in retirement,"—to use the words of one who had well studied Mr. Pitt's character—"we see him displaying the same greatness, the same activity, the same patriotism. His loyalty depended not upon office; his love of his country was equally evident in every situation. Instead of a peevish secession from the discharge of his public duty, or a hostile obstruction to the measures of the new Administration, which must instantly have sunk under the weight of his opposition, he gave them their best claim to credit, in the country, by an open declaration in their favour, and by a direct avowal of his determination to assist them while they acted upon the principles which had been the rule of his own conduct. This assistance he gave publicly and privately, with a zeal and disinterestedness of which there is no other instance in the history of political parties."*

* Tomline's Speech on the character of Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt took an active part in all the discussions on the best means of defending the country against the threatened invasion of the enemy, at this critical period. The national defence was a subject to which, it appears, he had directed all the powers of his active, acute, and comprehensive, mind. The measures proposed by Ministers, for the general defence of the country, in the summer of 1803, had his support, as far as they went; but it was his opinion—an opinion, indeed, with which the nation concurred—that they did not go far enough; that government did not seem to have a proper sense of the danger to which the country was exposed, and that, consequently, they did not apply means of adequate strength for repelling it. In all the debates on this important point, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Windham distinguished themselves most; both of them differing, essentially, from Ministers, in the measures which they proposed in 1804;—both equally solicitous to render the military power of the state efficient for offensive, as well as for defensive, purposes; but not entirely agreeing with each other as to the most eligible means for producing that desirable effect. Mr. Windham considered the volunteers as useless, if not worse than useless, and contended for the necessity of an exclusive reliance on a regular army; while Mr. Pitt regarded a formidable and regular force as indispensably necessary; but, at the same time, thought a large body of volunteers essentially important to the defence of the country.

In a debate, on the twenty-seventh of February, 1804, Mr. Pitt reproved Ministers for not having taken sufficient care to render the volunteers as useful and efficient as they were capable of being made by proper discipline, and instruction in military evolutions. After pointing out the means which appeared to him most proper for remedying this defect, he adverted to the low state of our naval preparation. In this statement, he declared, he was not influenced by the slightest prejudice against any man; on the contrary, in the whole of his observations, he wished to keep aloof from every description of asperity, which, he thought, ought not, upon any account, to be introduced in the course of that discussion. This was not a time for the operation of any party-spirit. Every mind should be engaged, every heart should be devoted, to the consideration of the public defence; and, in the prosecution of it,

he expressed his hope, that Ministers would weigh well the sacred duty they had to perform, the awful responsibility of their situation. It would not be enough for them to say, that our preparations were great—they ought to be complete. He postponed, however, the full declaration of his sentiments, on the actual state of the naval defence of the country, till the fifteenth of March, when he made some specific motions on the subject.

His first motion was for an Address to the King, "that he may be pleased to give directions to have laid before the House an account of the number of ships of the line, ships of fifty guns, frigates, sloops of war, bombs, hired armed vessels, &c. in commission on the thirty-first of December, 1793, on the thirtieth of September, 1801, and on the thirty-first of December, 1803, specifying the service in which they were respectively employed." His next motion was, "that an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, for a copy of the contracts made, and the orders given, by the Lords of the Admiralty, in 1793, 1797, and 1803, with respect to the number of gun-vessels to be built, distinguishing the time at which such contract was made, the period at which it was to be brought to a conclusion, and the account of the sum to be paid for the performance of it." His third motion was, "that there be laid before the House a list of such ships as have been built in the King's yards, in 1793 and 1801."

Mr. Pitt acknowledged, that the object of these different motions was to obtain proof of a criminal neglect, in the Board of Admiralty, to provide a sufficient force for the defence of the country, in the present critical situation of public affairs. He stated that, since the present Lords of the Admiralty had come into office, only two ships of the line had been contracted for, to be built in the merchants' yards; while, during the last war, only two ships of the line had been furnished by the King's yards, out of twenty-nine ships of the line; and that there were, at that moment, docks and slips in the river unoccupied, which were calculated for building fourteen or fifteen ships of the line.—He also charged the Admiralty with having admitted the necessity of gun-brigs, and other vessels drawing little water, to counteract any efforts

which might be made, by the immense number of light vessels, stationed at Boulogne and elsewhere, for the avowed purpose of attempting a descent upon some part of the British shores. Mr. Pitt expressed his surprize at the opposition which was made to his motions, because Ministers had previously applied to him to be informed of the nature of them, and which information he gave them; and he understood, that it was their intention to assent to two of the motions, without any objections being suggested.

One of the most strenuous opposers of Mr. Pitt's motions was Mr. Sheridan, who did not blush to declare, that he "could only be actuated by factious and party motives!!!"—He was probably led to prefer this most unfounded charge, by a consciousness of its applicability to his own public conduct for some years past. He could not bear the smallest reflection on a *Whig* Minister; and, therefore, sought to counteract the effects of Mr. Pitt's plain statements, by a declamatory panegyric on the services of Lord St. Vincent, of which, however, he deemed it prudent to avoid all specification. In the blindness of his zeal, he ridiculed the idea of gun-brigs, although the Admiralty had recently acknowledged their utility, by ordering *twenty* of them to be built, and totally forgot, that there were numerous parts of our coast, most exposed to attack, which ships of the line could not possibly approach; and which, therefore, in the event of an attempt at invasion, would admit of no other *naval* defence than gun-boats, or armed vessels of a similar nature. He proclaimed abuses in every department of the navy, and highly extolled the zeal displayed in their correction; although, in fact, that zeal had been exerted only, or, at least, *chiefly*, in a way the most prejudicial to the naval service, and, consequently, the most detrimental to the interests of the country. Lord St. Vincent, seeing nothing but abuses in the naval department, and blind, as it were, to the inestimable services which the navy had rendered to the country, under this system of imputed corruption, began a *radical reform*, with all the zeal and energy of a modern Whig. Acknowledging even the existence of abuses, to a considerable extent, in that department, no man of sense, judgment, or reflection, could suppose that they admitted of an instantaneous cure. It was manifest that if, instead of alteratives adminis-

tered by the slow and cautious hand of prudence, to work a gradual melioration in the constitution of the navy, a rash empiric should exhibit the most powerful medicines, he might chance to *kill* where he proposed to *cure*. The harsh and severe measures adopted by the Admiralty gave great disgust to the workmen employed in the dock yards, and to every description of persons throughout the naval department. From a mistaken principle of economy, blended, perhaps, with an unwarrantable confidence in the pacific disposition of the French Cabinet, the naval stores were suffered to be wholly exhausted; the hemp, collected by the late Ministers, was publicly sold, and the agents of France were the principal purchasers; no care was taken to procure a fresh supply; even the most advantageous offers of providing ship-timber were rejected; the shipwrights, employed in the King's yards, were abruptly dismissed, without being allowed to finish the vessels, which they had contracted to build; the ships which, upon the declaration of war, it was necessary to send against the enemy, were many of them actually under repair; and no new ships were in such a state of forwardness as to afford a prospect of supplying the void occasioned by the inevitable casualties of the service. In short, so incompetent a Board of Admiralty had not been seen for a long series of years.

Mr. Fox, and other members of the new Whig party, took a different side from that which Mr. Sheridan adopted, and voted for the enquiry, in the full conviction, that it would terminate to the honour of their favourite Admiral. The inquiry, however, was strenuously resisted, as unnecessary, and as only calculated to waste the time of the House, by the Minister, who vied with the Opposition in panegyrising the First Lord of the Admiralty. Nothing, however, but presumption and ignorance combined, could have compared him with the late Lord Chatham, and have assigned to him the compliment bestowed on that real patriot—"clarum et memorabile nomen," &c. It is a matter of doubt, whether unmerited praise is not more prejudicial in its effects, than undeserved censure. The latter may discourage, but the former must disgust; and it is more easy to stimulate a discouraged spirit, than to conciliate a disgusted mind. No man ever enjoyed so high a reputation, who had done so little to deserve it, as Lord St. Vincent. In the whole

course of his naval career, there is not much to applaud, and very little to admire; and whoever has taken pains to investigate the details of that gallant action to which he was indebted for his title and pension, must, if he be not influenced by prejudice, or biassed by party, acknowledge that, as far as Lord St. Vincent was concerned in it, there was no opportunity for the display of extraordinary skill, spirit, or judgment; while the peculiar circumstances attending it must satisfy the impartial mind, that never was service so slight so profusely rewarded.*

Besides, there were many defects in the public character of this nobleman, which it is not necessary for the historian to enumerate. But Lord

* I am aware that, in this remark, I run counter to the general prejudices of the country; and no one respects more than myself the honest enthusiasm which confers praise on imputed gallantry, without taking the trouble to examine the grounds of it. The remark, however, has not been made without an attentive consideration of the public services of the nobleman to whom it relates. I have heard his professional judgment, and his personal courage, highly extolled; and I am far from wishing to question the justice of such praise. But a close and impartial examination of the whole of his public conduct, having convinced me that there is much more in it to censure than to commend, I have felt it to be my duty, not to suffer the bold assertions of interested partisans, the liberal concessions of timid politicians, nor the ostentatious display of self-confidence, and of fancied superiority, to deter me from expressing that conviction without reserve or disguise.

As to the battle off Cape St. Vincent, I do not mean to deny to the Commander-in-Chief any portion of the praise which may be due to him, for availing himself of the opportunity afforded him by the unskilful manœuvres of the Spanish Admiral, which produced a complete separation of his force, to attack that division of the enemy's fleet which held out the fairest hopes of success, and promised the easiest conquest. But here, I contend, the merit of the Commander ended; and hence it is, that I have been led to consider, that his services on that day were greatly overrated. Of the subsequent events it is foreign from my purpose to enter into any detail. I shall merely observe, that they tended most strongly to confirm me in my opinion.

In my account of the battle of St. Vincent, (page 93, Note) I observed, that, in the Admiral's official dispatch to the Admiralty, he took not the smallest notice of the extraordinary exertions of his officers and men. I have since learnt that, in his *private* letter to the Board, or to the First Lord, he did the most ample justice to their gallantry and good conduct. Still, however, the force of my observation remains; for, by confining his praises to a letter which the public never saw, and by omitting them in the dispatch which every body read, he departed from the conduct invariably pursued by other commanders.

St. Vincent was a Whig;—and party-spirit was suffered, as is, unhappily, too often the case, to supply the place of superior merit. It is true, however, that Mr. Pitt himself concurred in the praises so bountifully lavished on Lord St. Vincent.—" I admire," he said, " the uncommon valour, I extol the vast renown, the glorious achievements, of Lord St. Vincent. To him we are highly indebted for shedding extraordinary lustre on our national glory." But as, in attentively examining the public services of his Lordship, I have not been able to discover any solid ground for this admiration and praise, I cannot acquiesce in its justice, by whatever authority advanced. Mr. Pitt, at the same time, expressed his opinion, " that, between his Lordship, as a Commander on the sea, and his Lordship, as First Lord of the Admiralty, there is a wide difference."

In his reply Mr. Pitt entered more largely into the subject than he had done in his opening speech. Alluding to Mr. Sheridan's observations, he said,—" But we are amused with a brilliant flash of eloquence, (not lately a source of ordinary entertainment in this House) and we are told, ' all this scheme of gun-vessels is a job.' This sentiment, clothed in a wandering meteor, which fixed its ray of indignation upon me, shall not so far dazzle my organs of vision, as to prevent me from discovering the way by which I may relieve myself from the terrors of its effulgence. It is not necessary to conclude, because a service has been converted into a job, that it is an useless service. If pernicious food had been given to the Honourable Gentleman, he would not conceive it to be a reason for abstaining from all nourishment; so, in the former case, we must learn to distinguish between accident and substance; and, rejecting what is injurious, retain what is valuable." Ministers, having boasted of the comparative force of the navy, at the period when they came into power, and at the time of the present discussion, Mr. Pitt stated that, in 1801, we had one hundred and one sloops, whereas now we had but eighty-four; we then had sixty-nine gun-vessels, we had now thirty-seven; we then had one hundred and one cutters, we had now fifty-two.

The difference between the statements of Ministers, and those of their opponents, were so great, that nothing short of the production of

the official documents moved for by Mr. Pitt could suffice to ascertain the truth, and to satisfy the public mind. The Ministers, however, pertinaciously refused to produce them, and a majority of *seventy-one* sanctioned their resolution, *one hundred and thirty* having voted *for* Mr. Pitt's motion, and *two hundred and one against* it.

The eyes of the country began to be opened, by these discussions, to the incapacity of Mr. Addington's administration. The neglect not only to provide adequate means of defence at home,* but to animate the drooping spirits of the Continent, to resist the continued encroachments, and aggressions of France, betrayed a systematic weakness, an absence of wisdom in council, and of vigour in action, which demonstrated their inability to conduct the affairs of the State, with honour to themselves, or with advantage to the nation. In December, 1803, Buonaparté had the audacity to tell England, in his official gazette, "You *shall not* retain Malta; you *shall not* obtain Lampedosa; and you *shall* sign a treaty *less advantageous to you than that of Amiens!*"† Such language as this was never used with impunity, to England, before this revolutionary period; and the only becoming answer to it would have been, the most instantaneous adoption of an active and vigorous system of *offensive* warfare; a system which would have enabled our fleets and armies to hurl destruction on their insolent foe;—to keep his coasts in a constant state of alarm; to exhibit his impotence, even for the purpose of self-defence, in a striking point of view to his subjects, his tributaries, and his vassals; and to rouse, by the powerful operation of example, the dormant energies of the Continent, into strong and effective action. But so far was Mr. Addington from the adoption or encouragement of

* Such was the alarm excited at the weak and inadequate measures of national defence adopted by the Ministers, that, about this time, a respectable Member of Parliament strenuously urged me, as a public writer, to employ my pen to rouse them to a more lively sense of their danger, and to a more active and efficient discharge of their duty. In answer to this call I observed, that I thought his TONGUE *in* Parliament would prove infinitely more operative than my PEN *out of* Parliament; and I must do him the justice to say, that he was not silent upon this important subject.

† See Moniteur, December eighth, 1803.

such decisive measures, that he seemed lost in self-congratulation and in self-confidence. It might naturally have been inferred, that he was stupified by the extraordinary height to which he had been unexpectedly raised,—his weak head felt giddy when he looked down from the proud eminence on which he stood,—that his foot tottered under him, and that the strength of his intellects proved inadequate to sustain the awful weight of responsibility which he had, without due consideration, incurred,—had not the confident tone which he invariably assumed, the boldness with which he rejected the most judicious advice, the assurance with which he defended his own feeble, torpid, and impotent measures, forbidden the supposition, that he harboured the smallest doubt of the sufficiency of his own powers, to guide the vessel of the State, in perfect security, through the storms and tempests which assailed her on every side.

Whatever may be the cause, it is certain, that no efforts, adequate to the emergency, were made, either to counteract the effects of the enemy's boasted preparations, or to carry hostility to his own shores. The nation, then, were alarmed, and justly alarmed, at the torpidity of the Cabinet; and the incipient opposition of Mr. Pitt, whose friendly disposition to the Ministers was well known, tended materially to increase the apprehensions of the public. As soon, indeed, as a renewal of hostilities became unavoidable, Mr. Addington acknowledged the necessity of giving additional strength to the Cabinet; and, for this purpose, made some overtures to Mr. Pitt, in the spring of 1803. Mr. Pitt met this proposal with becoming candour; he professed his readiness, should he be honoured with his Majesty's commands for that purpose, to form a strong and efficient administration, including, of course, those statesmen with whom he had before acted; particularly Earl Spencer, Lord Grenville, and Mr. Windham. But such an administration by no means suited the views of Mr. Addington, who, if he did not retain the office of Premier, which it was scarcely to be supposed Mr. Pitt would submit to, resolved, at least, to preserve a majority in the Cabinet. He, therefore, objected strongly to the admission of Lords Spencer and Grenville, and Mr. Windham, into the administration, against whom, independently of the objection already stated, he conceived he had personal grounds of complaint, as they had pointedly attacked him in Parliament.

On this difference the negotiation broke off. Mr. Addington made several appeals to the public, through different channels, or, rather, perhaps, appeals were made for him, with a view to justify his own conduct, and to inculpate that of Mr. Pitt, on the subject of these overtures. Various tracts were published on both sides, but all the powers of sophistry were inadequate to conceal the plain state of the question from the public eye. In fact, one moment's reflection will suffice to convince any rational being of the justice and reasonableness of Mr. Pitt's proposal. Had he acceded to Mr. Addington's terms, he would have been placed in a situation in which no Minister had ever yet stood, and in which it might have been impossible for him to act with benefit to the country, or with honour to himself. Solely responsible, in the eyes of the nation, for the measures of government, yet without influence, and having but a single voice in the Cabinet, in which those measures must originate, he might, and very probably would, have been, not unfrequently reduced to the degrading necessity either of supporting in the House measures which he had condemned in the Cabinet, or else of publicly opposing his colleagues in office, and, thereby, of producing dissensions which must have materially affected the public service. It was to avert this evil, and to render his services effective, that Mr. Pitt refused to come into office without the aid of colleagues, whose talents had stood the test of long experience, and on whose principles and cordial concurrence he could place the firmest reliance. His conduct, then, was equally distinguished by honour and by wisdom; and, towering like the eagle on the cliff, he might look down with contempt on the weak efforts of the mole below, to undermine the lofty eminence on which he stood.

After the rejection of these overtures, Mr. Addington's public conduct displayed something like splenetic resentment; as if it were an affront to the dignity of a new and untried Premier, to refuse to enlist under his banners, on his own conditions. The possession of power seems to have produced a revolution in his mind; to have converted diffidence into confidence; and conscious inferiority into asserted superiority. He certainly, from this period, received the valuable advice of that eminent statesman, to whom he was principally indebted for his rise from the private ranks of society to an elevated situation in life, with less defe-

rence and respect; he seemed to take delight in associating with himself, in the Minority, one of the very few public men who had betrayed a marked personal enmity to Mr. Pitt; and rather anxious to stand forward in opposition to the motions which Mr. Pitt occasionally submitted to the House.

But it was not to be supposed that, whatever confidence Mr. Addington might feel in his own powers, or in the support of his colleagues, his administration could long withstand the united attacks of Mr. Pitt and his friends; and of the other two parties in Parliament, headed, respectively, by Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville. Most of Mr. Addington's political associates were men of great respectability, in private life, of sound principles, and of good intentions; but deficient in all the great essentials of a statesman; and destitute of that energy and decision which are indispensably necessary to the good government of the country, in turbulent and troublesome times.

The defence of the country was the great rock on which the Addingtonian administration was destined to split. On the twenty-third of April, 1804, Mr. Fox moved for a committee to revise the several bills which had been proposed for the accomplishment of this great object, and for devising efficient measures for complete and permanent defence. Mr. Pitt supported this motion, and again took a comprehensive view of the actual state of the country, as to its means of military and of naval defence. There was but one point on which he and Mr. Fox differed on this occasion;—the power vested in the King, by the Constitution, of calling out all the subjects of this realm to defend the country in case of invasion. Mr. Fox was, certainly, the first statesman who ever ventured to question the royal prerogative, in this particular. For nothing is more clearly laid down by all our law writers, ancient and modern, than that the power of calling on every description of his subjects to repair to his standard, when the enemy is about to invade his country, is vested in the King. It is a principle sanctioned, too, by the practice, as well as by the theory, of our Constitution; and a principle conducive to the security of the nation. Mr. Pitt asserted and maintained this principle against the attacks of Mr. Fox. On all other points these rival states-

men agreed, and the result of this concurrence of sentiment was a strong division, in which the Ministers carried the question against the motion, by a majority of only *fifty-two*. Two hundred and four having voted for the motion of Mr. Fox, and two hundred and fifty-six against it.

Two days after this discussion, on the twenty-fifth of April, another debate took place on the same subject, in consequence of a motion by Mr. Secretary Yorke, for the House to resolve itself into a committee, on a bill for the suspension of the army of reserve act. This motion was resisted by Mr. Pitt; and, on the division, there appeared, in support of the ministerial plan, two hundred and forty; against it, two hundred and three; leaving, to the Minister, a majority of only *thirty-seven*.

This additional mark of dissatisfaction with the conduct of Ministers proved the death-blow to their expiring power. They immediately tendered their resignations, and the King, whose wishes were in unison with those of his people, consigned to Mr. Pitt the task of forming a new administration. When the strength of that Cabinet over which Mr. Pitt had before presided for so many years was considered, nothing appeared more easy than the formation of a new Ministry. It was naturally imagined, that those statesmen who had so long, and so cordially, united their efforts to preserve the State from danger, in the most perilous times, would be ready again to stand forward in her support, and to resume, in obedience to the call of their Sovereign, the same situations which they had so ably and so honourably filled before. Unhappily, it appeared that, since their secession from power, these noble persons had formed some new connections, or, at least, had imbibed some new ideas, respecting the materials of which a new administration ought to be formed. They thought, though it is difficult to conceive by what train of reasoning their minds had first been brought to such a conclusion, that no Ministry could be efficient, unless it were composed of the leading members of the three parties in Parliament;—those of Mr. Pitt, of Mr. Fox, and of Lord Grenville. Mr. Pitt had no objection, if it should be the King's wish, to admit Mr. Fox into the Cabinet; but his Majesty objected to this proposal, and supported his objection on

grounds, the validity of which no one who had studied the public character, and traced the public conduct, of Mr. Fox, could, for a moment, dispute. Mr. Pitt urged his reasons, with becoming firmness, for the expediency of comprizing Mr. Fox in the new Ministry; but he did not think it compatible with his duty as a subject, nor decorous in him as a statesman, to press this point more strongly upon the King, much less to make it the ground of withholding his own services from his Sovereign and his country.

Lord Grenville, however, and his associates in this new system, remained firm to their purpose, and rendered a compliance with their wishes the *sine quâ non* of their return to office. The following letter from Lord Grenville to Mr. Pitt, was published as the defence of their conduct on this occasion.

" My Dear Pitt,

" I have already apprized you, that all the persons to whom, at " your desire, I communicated what passed between us yesterday, agree " with me in the decided opinion, that we ought not to engage in the " administration which you are now employed in forming. We should " be sincerely sorry if, by declining this proposal, we should appear less " desirous than we must always be, of rendering to his Majesty, to the " utmost of our power, every advice of which he may be graciously " pleased to think us capable. No consideration of personal ease or " comfort, no apprehension of responsibility, nor reluctance to meet the " real situation into which the country has been brought, have any " weight in this decision; *nor are we fettered by any engagement on " the subject, either expressed or implied*; we rest our determination " solely on our strong sense of the impropriety of our becoming parties " to a system of goverment which is to be formed, at such a moment as " the present, *on a principle of exclusion.*

" It is unnecessary to dwell on the mischiefs which have already " resulted from placing the offices of government in weak and incapable " hands. We see no hope of any effectual remedy for these mischiefs, " but by uniting in the public service ' as large a proportion as possible

" of the weight, talents, and character, * to be found in public men of " *all descriptions*, and *without any exception*.' This opinion I have " already had occasion to express to you in the same words, and we " have, for some time past, been publicly acting in conformity to it; " nor can we, while we remain impressed with that persuasion, concur " in defeating an object for which the circumstances of the times afford " at once so strong an inducement, and so favourable an occasion.

" An opportunity now offers, such as this country has seldom seen, " for giving to its government, in a moment of peculiar difficulty, the " full benefit of the services of all those who, by the public voice " and sentiment, are judged most capable of contributing to its pros- " perity and safety. The wishes of the public, upon this occasion, are " completely in unison with its interests, and the advantages which, " not this country alone, but all Europe, and the whole civilized world, " might derive from the establishment of such an administration, at " such a crisis, would probably have exceeded the most sanguine " expectations.

" We are certainly not ignorant of the difficulties which might " have obstructed the final accomplishment of such an object, however " earnestly pursued. But when, in the very first instance, all trial of " it is precluded, and when the denial is made the condition of all sub- " sequent arrangements, we cannot but feel that there are no motives, " of whatever description, which could justify our taking an active part " in the establishment of a system so adverse to our deliberate and " declared opinions.

" I remain,
" My dear Pitt, &c. &c. &c.
(Signed) " GRENVILLE."

* His Lordship, after the death of Mr. Pitt, had an opportunity of forming an administration on his own favourite principle; and there is reason to believe, that the measures which it adopted, for promoting " the prosperity and safety" of the country, were not such as to excite a wish for the repetition of a similar experiment, by a similar combination of " weight, talents, and character."

The want of that classical accuracy of language, which so generally marks the slightest compositions of the scholar and the gentleman, would lead me to question the authenticity of this letter, were it not for the consideration, that Lord Grenville's neglect to disclaim it, would, if it were really a fabrication, subject his Lordship to the charge of a culpable contempt of public opinion, which it would be presumptuous to impute to him.* Compelled, therefore, to receive it, as the genuine production of his Lordship's pen, it becomes a duty to expose the weakness and fallacy of the positions which it contains.

It is perfectly clear from this letter, that the *only* obstacle which Lord Grenville and his friends considered as insurmountable to an union with Mr. Pitt, was the King's objection to Mr. Fox, as a Member of the Cabinet. Respect for the Sovereign, rising paramount to all delicacy or forbearance towards any of his subjects, renders it necessary to call the reader's attention to the probable grounds on which that objection was founded. It must be remembered, then, that Mr. Fox had declared himself an enthusiastic admirer of the French revolution, which produced the murder of the King, the abolition of the aristocracy, and a general system of oppression and plunder;—that, through the various stages of that revolution, he pertinaciously adhered to his original opinion, and uniformly derided the notion of danger to a foreign state, from the infusion of those principles which had effected the destruction of the French monarchy.—When these principles had made considerable progress in this country, when all the sound part of the community were alarmed at the rapid progress of disaffection, and when seditious societies, in every quarter, threatened to overthrow the venerable fabric of the British Constitution, Mr. Fox, though a word of discouragement from his mouth in the Senate would have silenced the voice of treason, and have compelled jacobinism to retire within the inmost recesses of her den, not only forbore to utter that word, but all his speeches, in Parliament and elsewhere, were calculated to fan the flame of revolt, and to animate the agents of sedition. He systematically opposed every

* I have found, upon inquiry, that the authenticity of this letter was never doubted by any of Mr. Pitt's friends.

measure suggested by Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, for stifling the rising spirit of anarchy, and for securing the Church and the Throne against the attacks of their numerous and infuriated enemies. Every legislative attempt to check the progress of treason and sedition met, in Mr. Fox, with a most determined opponent. The war which Parliament, and the nation at large, had repeatedly proclaimed to be just and necessary, he uniformly pronounced to be unjust and unnecessary. And, lastly, when peace was concluded, he openly rejoiced at the event, *because* it was glorious to the *enemies of his country!* If such conduct, pursued systematically for the long term of seventeen years, did not supply as strong, as proper, as honourable, and as constitutional, an objection, as the mind of an Englishman can conceive, to the admission of Mr. Fox into the Cabinet, no conduct whatever, short of convicted delinquency, could constitute an adequate objection. But there is another important point involved in this question. The Constitution has, for the wisest purposes, vested exclusively in the Sovereign the right of chusing the servants of the Crown, without exception or restraint. That the right of *choice* includes the right of *rejection* it would be a waste of words to *prove* by argument. To call the latter right in question is to impeach the former, and to destroy one of the leading features of a monarchical government.

But it forms not one of the least extraordinary parts of this case, that Lord Grenville and his associates were members of that Cabinet by whose advice the King erased the name of Charles James Fox from the list of his Privy Counsellors; a mark of degradation never inflicted, but as the punishment, either of declared delinquency, or of imputed disaffection!—Mr. Fox had never recanted any of those principles, had never retracted any of those expressions, which had induced the members of the Cabinet to advise the infliction of this disgrace upon his head. If, then, it had been proposed to them, immediately after his exclusion from the Privy Council, to receive him as a member of the Cabinet, would they not have indignantly spurned such a proposal, and have regarded it as an insult to themselves? It is impossible to doubt, for a moment, that such would have been their conduct; for the same acts, on the part of Mr. Fox, which rendered him unfit to be a Privy Counsellor, must, *a*

fortiori, have disqualified him for a seat in the Cabinet; and it is clear, that Mr. Fox stood, at this moment, in precisely the same situation, in respect to his merits or demerits, as at the period when he incurred the disgrace in question;—or rather, he now stood in a worse situation, since he had exhibited additional proofs of the same sentiments, additional instances of the same misconduct, which had drawn upon him the signal mark of his Sovereign's displeasure. Here, then, Lord Grenville himself had acted upon that *principle of exclusion*, which he now considered as an insurmountable bar to his acceptance of office. His Lordship, too, it may be remarked, found no deficiency of "weight, talents, and character," in the administration of that day, from which not only Mr. Fox himself, but all his political friends, were excluded. The "public voice and sentiment" supported that administration, and there was not the smallest reason to believe, that they would not have given an equal support to a Cabinet composed of the same individuals, at the present moment. Nor will it be contended that, perilous as the times unquestionably were, they were to be compared, for extent of danger, to the early periods of the revolutionary war, when hostilities abroad were less formidable than disaffection at home. Lord Grenville was not asked to associate with "weak and incapable" men; but with men whose strength and capacity he had long experienced, and uniformly acknowledged. The grounds, then, here urged by his Lordship, for his refusal to come into power, without Mr. Fox for his associate, are not to be supported by either arguments or facts.

It is worthy of remark, that Lord Grenville here expressly denied that he was fettered by any engagement, either expressed or implied, to Mr. Fox, or to any other persons; and that he did not conceive himself bound to make any stipulations in favour of the Catholic claims, as the condition of his acceptance of office. It would have been a novel sight for the nation to behold an administration founded on the *latitudinarian* principle of admitting public men, *of all descriptions*, and *without any exception*. By the establishment of such a basis, public virtue would have been reduced to a level with public profligacy; loyalty and disaffection, patriotism and treason, would have been placed on the same footing, and the King might have boasted of a more motley cabinet

than any to be found in the history of ancient or modern times. To suppose that Mr. Pitt had ever publicly acted upon, or privately admitted, as a rule of conduct, any such levelling principle as this, would be to admit a supposition at variance with the whole tenour of his public life. It was his wish, indeed, to form a strong and efficient administration; envy and political animosity were strangers to his bosom; and he would willingly have acted in the Cabinet, with Mr. Fox and his friends, had it been the pleasure of his Sovereign to receive them as his servants. But he never had acted for a moment, and never would have acted, on the strange notion of depriving himself of the privilege of objecting to any person, of whatever description, who might be proposed as his associate in power. Lord Grenville's statement, then, was loose, indefinite, unguarded, and unwarrantable. Mr. Pitt's conduct, when out of power, was framed on no such opinion, but on a plain, simple, sense of duty; which led him to consider measures without reference to men; and to vôte, upon every question, according to his conscience, without considering what description of men supported or opposed it.

Had the King yielded to the importunities of combined parties, at this important conjuncture, and suffered an administration to be formed agreeable to the wishes of Lord Grenville, it is pretty evident, that the united friends of his Lordship and Mr. Fox would have had a preponderating influence, and, indeed, a numerical majority, in the Cabinet. Whatever measures, therefore, they chose to propose, must, of course, have been adopted, or the administration must have been dissolved. Mr. Pitt, then, in respect of weight in the Ministry, would have been placed in as bad a situation as if he had met the overtures of Mr. Addington, in 1803, and become a part of that administration. On the other hand, if Mr. Pitt had been as peremptory as Lord Grenville in imposing on his Sovereign a Minister in whom he could not confide, and to whom he had a strong and constitutional objection, the King would have been rendered a cypher in the State, the tool, the pageant, of an aristocratic party, in whose hands all the real power of the Monarchy would have been vested. But, happily for the country, Mr. Pitt knew his duty too well, and was too resolute in the discharge of it, to load the venerable head of his Sovereign with sorrow and disgrace. He

obeyed the royal commands; and, by the twelfth of May, a new Ministry was formed, without the assistance of the friends either of Lord Grenville or of Mr. Fox.

The *Cabinet* was composed of—Mr. Pitt, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer; Duke of Portland, President of the Council; Lord Eldon, Lord Chancellor; Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Privy Seal; Lord Viscount Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty; Earl of Chatham, Master-General of the Ordnance; Lord Hawkesbury, Secretary of State for the Home Department; Lord Harrowby, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Earl Camden, Secretary of State for the Department of War and the Colonies; Lord Castlereagh, President of the Board of Controul for the Affairs of India; and Lord Mulgrave, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Mr. William Dundas was made Secretary at War; Mr. Canning, Treasurer of the Navy; Mr. George Rose and Lord Charles Somerset, Joint Paymasters of the Forces; the Duke of Montrose and Lord Charles Spencer, Joint Paymasters-General; Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Sturges Bourne, Secretaries of the Treasury; Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls; Mr. Perceval, Attorney-General; Sir Thomas Manners Sutton, Solicitor-General; Lord Hardwicke, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Lord Redesdale, Lord Chancellor; Sir Evan Nepean, Chief Secretary; and Mr. Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

When Mr. Pitt now resumed the reins of power, he had no very encouraging prospect before him, to animate his hopes, or to stimulate his exertions. At home, the army and navy, particularly the latter, were by no means in a situation which corresponded with the immense resources of the country, and with the general spirit with which they were appropriated to the public service. The regular army had not been increased to the extent necessary for hostile operations; while the most complete ignorance, and the most decided incapacity, could not have left the navy in a worse state, in every respect, than that in which it was found by Mr. Pitt, on his return to office. The number of volunteers in the kingdom was, indeed, great; but they had been assembled

without discrimination or judgment; and were destitute of those rules and regulations which are essential, not only to the preservation of discipline, but to the prevention of discord and anarchy. The evils resulting from this defect became daily more manifest and alarming; and it was evident that, without the adoption of some regular system, evil would flow from the very source of good.

Abroad, the colossal power of France struck the astonished eye on every side. Buonaparté assigned no bounds to his ambition, imposed no control on his passions, prescribed no limits to his vengeance. As he approached nearer to the authority and dignity of a Sovereign, he seemed resolved, if possible, to annihilate the sad relics of that unhappy race which had, for so many centuries, given Monarchs to France. The Duke D'Enghein, the worthy representative of the House of Condè, had, since the Continental peace, lived in retirement, at the town of Ettenheim, in the Electorate of Baden. In this neutral territory, the Corsican, who acknowledged no law, but that of force, resolved to seize him; for which purpose he sent General Caulincourt, his Aid-de-Camp, with a body of cavalry, who entered the Electorate, without ceremony, on the fifteenth of March, and, coming unawares upon the destined victim of the tyrant's rage, secured the Duke, and several of his friends, without difficulty, and even without opposition. The Duke was immediately conveyed to Strasburgh, and thence, without delay, and without any interval of repose, to Paris, where he was conducted to the same prison, the *Temple*, which had been the last scene of his Sovereign's miseries. He was not, however, permitted to remain here, or to take the smallest rest, but was hurried away to the castle of Vincennes, where he arrived on the twentieth of March; and that same evening, exhausted with fatigue, he was dragged before his judges. A mock trial ensued, and the illustrious prisoner was found guilty of having borne arms against the French Republic, to which he owed no allegiance, and of having conspired to restore the French Monarchy, to which he was bound by every tie that is obligatory on the human mind. In the night, the Corsican's brother-in-law, Murat, (now the mock King of Naples) with four other General officers, among whom were his own brother, Louis Buonaparté, (the new Sovereign of Holland) and Duroc, the Cor-

sican's Secretary, arrived at the Castle, under an appropriate escort of *Mamelucs*. The murderous deed was performed by the Consul's body guards. The Duke died, as he had lived, with the spirit of a Christian soldier. He expressed his satisfaction that his assassins were not Frenchmen, (they were Italians) as his wretched countrymen would have one crime less to answer for. And, Heaven knows! the black catalogue of *their* crimes needed no addition.

This act of wanton and needless barbarity rendered the unprincipled ruffian, by whom it was committed, an object of execration to the great mass of his new slaves; and, could any expedition have been directed, at this moment, with a view to afford assistance and protection to the discontented in France, there is reason to believe, that a very general insurrection might have been easily excited. But the military despot had such a powerful force at his command as to keep the people in that abject state of subjection which precludes all attempt at liberation, without the most powerful foreign assistance, and which, indeed, almost stifles the wish to obtain it. The effect which the murder of the Duke D'Enghein had upon the different potentates of Europe was such as to shew the wretched situation to which most of them were reduced. Russia and Sweden, indeed, evinced a spirit which would have done credit to better times; their remonstrances were strong, pointed, and decisive; they breathed the language of offended honour, and of wounded humanity. But they were addressed to a wretch to whose bosom humanity, honour, and remorse were equally strangers. The correspondence which ensued displayed, on the part of the two Northern powers, a manly perseverance in the same honourable principles and conduct; and, on the part of France, a contempt of every thing that is magnanimous, noble, and decorous; fraud, duplicity, and falsehood, marked every communication which issued from the black Cabinet of St. Cloud.* The appeal which the Emperor Alexander made, on this

* Buonaparté did not blush, in Talleyrand's note to the Russian Minister, openly to charge the English with the assassination of the Emperor Paul; and, with the brazen effrontery, peculiar to the Corsican, he stated it as a notorious fact, which required no argument to prove, and no comment to explain.

occasion, to the Princes of the German Empire, was received, with the solitary exception of the Elector of Hanover, in a way which bespoke their abject degradation, their miserable state of dependence on a foreign usurper. Prussia, who might again have proclaimed herself the champion of violated justice, evinced a determination to support the Corsican, in every act, however atrocious, unjust, or inhuman. The Elector of Baden, too, who, if he had one spark of honour in his bosom, should have been the first to resent the violation of his territory, and the gross insult which he had thereby sustained, vied with the Prussian Monarch in professions of kindness and respect for the base assassin. Austria remained perfectly neutral and passive. Thus, for the present, Buonaparté had no opposition to dread on the Continent, although it was evident that the resentment of Russia only waited for a more favourable opportunity to break forth into open hostility. Encouraged by this state of things, the Consul proceeded to ascend the last step on the ladder of ambition. When all the previous preparations were made, addresses were presented to him, by the legislative and municipal bodies, and by the different armies, in the months of March, April, and May, (1804) beseeching him to become Emperor of the French. No extreme of baseness, in adulation, which the human mind can conceive, could exceed that by which these addresses were marked. A man stained with every crime, and whose hands were still reeking with the blood of an innocent and virtuous Prince, was, with the most astonishing contempt of decency and truth, held up as a model of virtue. The slaves, whom he ruled with a rod of iron, who trembled at his nod, and who held him in execration, were represented as happy under his mild and free government, and as ardently desirous to perpetuate his reign. When the public had thus been apprized of the Consul's intentions, a decree was finally passed, by the Senate, on the eighteenth of May, which abolished the Constitution which the Senators and Consuls themselves had so recently sworn to observe and maintain inviolate, declared Napoleone Buonaparté Emperor of the French, and the imperial dignity hereditary in the family of this upstart foreigner. The new Emperor then addressed an impious letter to his bishops, in which he ascribed his elevation to Providence, and ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung, in all the churches, on the glorious occasion. The bishops kept pace, in their

adulation, with the military and civil bodies, and framed new prayers adapted to the new order of things; while, to crown the whole, and to render, as it were, religion herself the handmaid to usurpation, the Pope was ordered to attend the ceremony of the coronation, and, with his own hands, to place the crown on the sacrilegious head of the usurper. This ceremony, which put the seal to the degradation of France, took place on the nineteenth of November, in the cathedral of Notre Dame, at Paris, the same church in which, with more zeal, the senseless Parisians had, a few years before, worshipped a naked prostitute, as the Goddess of Reason, in obedience to the command of Buonaparté's friend and predecessor, Maximilien Robespierre. The aged Pontiff thus disgraced the character which he bore, and the religion which he professed, by administering "the holy unction" to an impious usurper, and by dignifying an impenitent murderer with the title of his "beloved son, in Jesus Christ!!!"

Mr. Pitt's attention was first directed to the increase of the military force, with a view to a co-operation with any of the Continental powers, who might be induced to make another effort for the emancipation of Europe from the tyranny of France; and next, to an endeavour to ascertain the intentions of the principal powers of the North, and to confirm those intentions, should they be found to correspond with the enlarged views of the British Cabinet. On the fifth of June, he introduced a bill for the creation of an additional force, by compelling every parish in the kingdom to supply, according to their respective population, a certain number of men, towards an army of reserve, destined to recruit the regular army, which, by this means, Mr. Pitt supposed, would receive an annual supply of 12,000 men. This scheme met with considerable opposition, in all its stages, and was ultimately carried by a small majority.

It was evident, however, that the opposition given to this bill was not, exclusively, influenced by the objections which its opponents held, either to its principle, or to its provisions, much less to a concurrence in any other plan which might constitute a fit substitute, or adequately provide for the defence of the country. It was natural, indeed, that, on

such a subject, great difference of opinion should prevail, and that many should prefer, from conviction, one means of providing for the national defence to another. But, in the present case, the personal friends of Mr. Addington, with that gentleman at their head, independently of such objections, could not but feel a strong desire to prove the inferiority of the proposed plan to that suggested by the late Minister; nor could they be expected to wish success to the measure of one, by whose efforts, principally, they had lost their own situations. The members of the Grenville party were also stimulated by the pangs of disappointed ambition; while the keenest resentment sharpened the opposition of the *excluded* adherents of Mr. Fox. The operation of these various motives were too visible in the course of the debates in Parliament, on the bill in question, to escape notice. Indeed, in the discussions of June eighteenth, when the bill passed through one of its stages, the spirit of party appeared, without the smallest attempt at concealment or reserve; and raged with such violence, that Mr. Sheridan devoted the greater part of a long speech, on the motion for reading the amendments to the additional force bill, to a comparison between the merits of the late, and those of the present Ministry; to a farcical description of the latter; and to an unqualified panegyric on Mr. Fox. Indeed, he did not hesitate to declare, that these litigations of party, that this contemptible struggle for place and power, were "of infinitely more importance" than the bill itself, which went to provide adequate means of defence for the country, at a season of considerable danger.* There were many circumstances, by which this discussion was marked, most disgraceful to the character of *that* House of Commons; and eminently calculated to deprive it of the esteem, respect, and confidence, of all serious friends to the Constitution of the country. On the fifteenth of June, the Opposition, at an early period of the day, found themselves in greater numbers than the Ministerial side of the House, when they had recourse to a party-manœuvre, which might have been regarded as a masterly display of skill in the revelries of a tavern meeting; but which, when performed by the representatives of a great nation, attached disgrace to their proceedings. To Mr. Grey the honour of this splendid triumph

* Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates for 1804, June 18th, p. 729.

belonged. Aware of his temporary advantage, he suddenly pressed the question for the second reading of the amendments, and carried a majority of *six* against it. The evil which such a stratagem was calculated to promote was, however, rendered harmless, by a subsequent discussion on the same day, when Mr. Grey's motion, for postponing the second reading of the amendments for three months, was rejected, and Mr. Ryder's amendment, for substituting "Monday next," for three months, was carried by 214 against 185. During the debate, Mr. Spencer Stanhope, feeling that indignation which no one, who was desirous of supporting the dignity of the British Senate, could fail to experience, truly represented, that the proceeding of Mr. Grey "*would be considered by the country as disgraceful and contemptible.*"* The Speaker, however, decided that, by the application of such epithets to any proceedings of that House, he had been highly disorderly.—Yet, three days after, when Mr. Sheridan termed the majority of the House, on a recent division, "a *small, miserable,* and *pitiful,* majority, such as no Minister could think an honour to him;"† and represented the conduct of a portion of that House, as "mean, shabby, and unbecoming,"‡ the Speaker did not feel himself called upon to pronounce such language to be disorderly or improper.

In the opposition to this measure, were evidently united all the persons who wished to dispossess Mr. Pitt of his place, or, at least, to produce a radical change in the Ministry; and this wish had a greater influence on the votes of many, than, perhaps, they were disposed to acknowledge, even to themselves. Mr. Sheridan, having praised the conduct of Mr. Addington in resigning when he had only a small majority in his favour, inferred the necessity of Mr. Pitt's resignation, because he had carried this measure by a majority nearly as small; as if the merits of an administration were to be appreciated by a single measure, respecting which there were probably as many different opinions, as there were leading Members in the House. This politician wilfully

* Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates for 1804, June 15th, p. 693.

† Idem. Ibid. p. 731. ‡ Idem. Ibid.

overlooked the ruling cause of Mr. Addington's resignation;—namely, the evident weakness of his general system of government, and the want of confidence which it necessarily engendered.

Mr. Pitt, in answer to this singular remark of Mr. Sheridan's, pertinently observed, that, broad as the hint might be, it was not broad enough for him to take it. He was yet sanguine enough to believe the bill would pass; if it should not, all he had to lament was, that the country would be deprived of the increased means of security, which, he flattered himself, he had provided for it. Should he be disappointed in that respect, it must not be supposed that he should consider his disappointment as a defeat. He should merely treat it as the decision of the House on the dry merits of the bill. If this scheme should be rejected, another project, which, he trusted, would be less objectionable, should be submitted, and the *hint* should not be taken, until he found his attempts to promote the public security utterly nugatory and ineffectual; then he should retire, not with mortification, but with triumph, confident of having exerted his best endeavours to serve his country. Mr. Pitt said, he would not discuss how far a wider basis for the formation of his Majesty's government would have evinced the wisdom of the Sovereign; but he should not think the prerogative entire, if they were permitted thus to deliberate on its exercise, so far as to examine the propriety or impolicy of inviting a principal person on the opposite bench to participate in the public councils of the State. Thus to interfere would be to alter the constitution of the land, which, although free, was yet monarchical; and, for the preservation of its liberties and immunities, all its parts should be protected from violation.

This was true constitutional language, and evidently proved, that Mr. Pitt had formed a much more accurate idea of the principles of the Constitution, and of the duties of a subject and of a Minister, than either of those parties, who, though they differed, radically, on every *fundamental principle of government*, and on every *essential point of policy*, now wonderfully agreed in opposing his administration.*

* Great pains were taken at this period, both by speeches in Parliament, and through the medium of the press, to justify a coalition of men, who had differed on points of the highest

During the Parliamentary recess of 1804, Mr. Pitt was sedulously employed in cementing a good understanding, and in strengthening the connection which subsisted between this country and the Court of St. Petersburgh. And his success, in this instance, was so complete, that the foundation was laid for a new confederacy against France, as soon as a favourable opportunity should occur for carrying it into effect.

In the mean time, the state of Ireland called for no small portion of the Minister's attention. The flames of rebellion, though stifled for a time, had never been completely subdued; and the lurking spirit of discontent incessantly threatened to break out into open revolt,—Even the conciliatory conduct of Lord Hardwicke, which received the praises of all those who had palliated the enormities of 1798, and who always ascribed the turbulent disposition of the natives to the oppressive measures of the government; which had been even applauded by the Papists themselves; did not secure the Viceroy from an attempt to subvert his power, to attack his person, and to overthrow the government. On the twenty-third of July, 1803, a body of insurgents, under the conduct of Robert Emmett, (whose brother had been deeply engaged in the Rebellion of 1793) flew to arms, murdered the Lord Chief Justice Kilwarden, and Colonel Brown, in the streets of Dublin; and for some hours spread consternation and dismay through a capital, which contained a sufficient number of troops to annihilate them in an instant. To whatever cause it

importance to the prosperity of the State, and not unessential to its existence as an independent monarchical community. It was represented to be the duty of every honest man * " rather to conciliate unanimity, than to inflame differences; rather to bury, than to revive, the recollection of former animosities." As an abstract position, and as applicable to the ordinary contentions of party, and to the common struggles of their respective leaders, it might be admitted without danger; but applied, as it then was, to the circumstances attending the appointment of the present administration, it was fallacious, weak, and untenable. *Political morality* sustained a severe shock, by the memorable coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox, which excited the resentment of the most numerous, and the most honest part of the community; and a subsequent coalition, formed upon the very principle advanced on this occasion, inflicted on it a still more fatal blow; and violently shook, if it did not absolutely destroy, that confidence in public men, which constitutes the firmest support of a government.

* See Lord Grenville's speech on the 15th of February, 1805.

was owing, whether to want of information, to excess of confidence, or to culpable neglect, certain it is, that those precautions were not adopted by the government, which would have sufficed to prevent this dreadful outrage, or, at least, to crush the insurrection at its birth. As it was, the shops and houses of the metropolis were shut up, in the middle of the day; the inhabitants were in a state of horrid alarm, dreading a renewal of the murderous scenes of 1798; the officers of the Volunteers and Yeomanry were intercepted as they repaired to their respective quarters; and it seemed, that nothing was wanting but prudence in the chiefs, and subordination in the followers, to take not only the capital, but the castle, the seat of government, by surprize! Fortunately, however, for the public, though unfortunately for individuals, the insurgents passed the whole day in useless acts of licentious violence, and in the murder of such officers as appeared in the streets. At length, two parties of the 21st regiment, of fifty men each, under the command of two subalterns, Lieutenants Brady and Douglas, having been attacked by the rebels, commenced hostilities against them, and, in a few minutes, compelled them to fly. Their leaders then effected their escape, and the insurgents retired to their homes. Emmett, and others of the chief conspiritors, were soon after apprehended, tried, and executed.

But though this rash attempt was thus speedily defeated, discontent still continued to prevail, and it had been deemed expedient, and indeed necessary, to suspend the operations of the Habeas Corpus act in that country. The Papists, too, had appointed a committee to act in the capital, for the purpose of framing a petition to Parliament for their admission to a full share of political power with Protestants. They had also, at this time, and had continued to have, ever since the last rebellion, an accredited agent at Paris! The committee in question had been suffered to hold its meetings regularly, not only without the smallest interruption from the Viceroy, who certainly had no right to interrupt them, but in frequent communication with the government, and with its perfect approbation. But the loyal efforts of the Protestant Corporation of Dublin to counteract these mischievous efforts of the Papists, (for they could have no other than a mischievous tendency, at such a period, and under existing circumstances) strange to say! were not

viewed by the Viceroy with the same complacency. For a meeting of the Corporation having been convened in Dublin, in the spring of 1805, at which certain resolutions, expressive of the danger to the Constitution,* which must result from an admission of the Catholic claims, on the motion of Mr. Giffard, that gentleman was immediately dismissed, by Lord Hardwicke, from an office of trust in the customs, the duties of which he had conscientiously discharged for the long term of two and twenty years. The acknowledged cause of this dismission was Mr. Giffard's conduct in proposing the resolutions in question; the Viceroy declaring his wish to conciliate all parties, and to prevent all discussions upon religious subjects! Such a punishment, (accompanied by such an admission) for the exercise of a constitutional right, for the discharge of a sacred duty, is, happily, without a precedent in the annals of party; and if it were not a gross *abuse* of power, it was certainly a most unwarrantable exercise of it.

* The following were the resolutions proposed by Mr. Giffard, and adopted by the meeting, with only three dissentient voices: 1. "That we have seen, with astonishment and sorrow, a copy of a petition lately presented to Parliament, in the name of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and containing demands of political power, which, if yielded, must be ruinous to our happy Constitution in Church and State.

2. "That the time and manner of making these demands, while the horrors of the last ten years are still fresh in our recollection, are ungracious and improper; and must necessarily produce *the most dangerous irritation in the public mind.*

3. "That a petition be presented to each House of Parliament, in opposition to the demands of the Roman Catholics of Ireland."

If a *Popish* Viceroy had censured such resolutions, his conduct would have been natural;—but the conduct of a Protestant governor, in punishing the person who proposed them, was an act of political suicide. The corporation asserted their own rights with appropriate energy, and, in the following resolutions, passed on the fourth of May, very aptly characterized the proceeding of the Viceroy. 1. "That it is the undoubted right of every subject of this realm to petition any branch of the legislature." 2. "That to injure any subject for the exercise of his right, is oppressive." 3. "That we have heard, with strong feelings of regret, that a member of this assembly has been deprived of an office which he held for twenty-two years under the Crown, for having exercised this right in his corporate capacity.

It was not to be supposed, that while France was herself at war with this country, she would suffer her vassals and tributary states to remain at peace, unless, by so remaining, they could contribute more essentially to the gratification of her ambition, and to the promotion of her views, than by fighting her battles in the field. Spain was one of these states; she still reserved, indeed, the name of an independent nation, but she had lost every distinguishing characteristic of independence. France, by the treaty of Saint Ildefonso, and by subsequent conventions, had bound Spain so firmly to herself, that Buonaparté's will was as absolute at Madrid as at Paris; and he found, in *the Prince of Peace*, a Minister as obsequious as the apostate Talleyrand himself. Spain had contracted the obligation to supply him, in any war in which he might chuse to embark, whether offensive or defensive, aggressive or conservative, a certain number of ships and men, to be increased at his pleasure, so as, in fact, to include the whole military and naval force of the kingdom. The Corsican, however, found it his interest to receive money instead of military succours, and he accordingly stipulated, by a subsequent convention, for a monthly payment, the amount of which was not exactly ascertained, though it was known to be considerable. By this means Spain was more useful to him, than if she had been at war; since her vessels, being in no danger of capture, could bring home her treasures in safety, to enable France to continue the war against this country; and she could supply France with the produce of her colonies, of which she stood very much in need.

The British Ministry had long complained of this arrangement, which bore every feature, and many of the effects, of decided hostility. Evasive answers were given to their remonstrances; but, at length, the continued armaments in the Spanish ports, the march of French seamen through Spain to man the ships, and other certain indications of warlike preparations, induced Mr. Pitt to insist on a categorical answer from the Spanish court; and to issue orders for preventing the ships of Spain from leaving her harbours; and to detain any vessels coming with treasure from Spanish settlements in South America. In consequence of these orders, Captain Moore, who commanded a squadron of frigates off the coast of Spain, took three vessels from the Rio de la Plata, richly

laden, on the fifth of October (1804); a fourth blew up during the action; for the Spanish commander refused to be detained, unless by force. But though hostilities were thus begun, no exertions were left untried, to induce the Spanish Cabinet to depart from the aggressive system of policy which it had adopted, in obedience to the mandates of France. These efforts, unhappily, proved unavailing, and a formal declaration of war was issued on the twenty-fourth of January, 1805.

[1805.] All the papers relating to the dispute with Spain were immediately laid before Parliament, and became the subject of a lengthened discussion, continued for two days, the eleventh and twelfth of February. Mr. Pitt entered into a long and luminous explanation, and defence, of the conduct of the British government; which was, however, severely reprobated by Mr. Grey; who considered the language and conduct of the Cabinet, in the first instance, (during Mr. Addington's administration) as too tame, irresolute, and indecisive; and, at last, after Mr. Pitt came into power, as too precipitate and too violent. He moved various resolutions conformable with these sentiments. A long discussion ensued, in which much learning was displayed, in explaining and applying the law of nations, as laid down by Vattel and others, and in which much special pleading was applied to the purpose of perverting the obvious meaning of the plainest passages referred to in support of opposite conclusions. Mr. Windham, Dr. Lawrence, Mr. Fox, and Lord Temple, joined in censuring the conduct of Ministers, while it was ably defended by Lord Castlereagh, Sir John Nicholls, the Master of the Rolls, and again, by Mr. Pitt himself, who made a masterly reply to all the arguments which had been advanced in support of Mr. Grey's amendment; which, on a division, was rejected by three hundred and thirteen votes against one hundred and six.

The opposition to Mr. Pitt seemed now to have acquired a systematic form, and men, who had hitherto differed on all the essentials of civil government, united in order to dispossess him of that situation in which many of them had repeatedly avowed their ardent wishes to see him placed; and to reduce their Sovereign to the necessity of accepting such an administration as an aristocratic party should chuse to impose upon

him. The defence of the country, which had already undergone so ample a discussion, was a subject on which it was conceived all the supporters of the late Ministry might be brought to concur with the present motley Opposition. The experiment was accordingly made, by Mr. Sheridan, who, on the sixth of March, moved for a repeal of the additional force act. He displayed, on this, as on all other questions, his usual talent for wit and pleasantry, for joke and repartee, which he always introduced, whether the subjects were serious or light, grave or ludicrous. Mr. Pitt, in allusion to this faculty, observed, " He seldom condescends to favour us with a display of his extraordinary powers of imagination and of fancy; but when he does come forward, we are prepared for a grand performance. No subject comes amiss to him, however remote from the question before the House. All that his fancy suggests at the time, or that he has collected from others; all that he can utter in the ebullition of the moment; all that he has slept on and matured, are combined and produced for our entertainment. All his hoarded repartees—all his matured jests—the full contents of his common-place book—all his severe invectives—all his bold, hardy assertions —all that he has been treasuring up for days and months, he collects into one mass, which he kindles into a blaze of eloquence, and out it comes altogether, whether it has any relation to the subject of debate or not." Among the " bold, hardy assertions," to which Mr. Sheridan had recourse on the present occasion, was, that *Mr. Pitt was known to have given a pledge to the Catholics of Ireland, on his abandonment of office.* After the ample explanations which have been entered into upon that subject, it becomes a work of supererogation to observe, that this assertion was wholly destitute of truth; and that there was not even a shadow of foundation to support it. Mr. Sheridan, however, was foiled in his political tactics; for, although he had displayed some judgment in his choice of a topic, his motion was rejected by a majority of *one hundred and forty.*

Another means adopted for harassing the Minister, was the petition from the Papists of Ireland, which was taken into consideration, by the Lords, on the tenth, and in the Commons, on the thirteenth and fourteenth of May, when it underwent the longest and most elaborate dis-

cussion which it had hitherto experienced in England. It is impossible to consider this petition in any other light, than as intended to embarrass the government, and, as calculated, though certainly not intended by some who supported it, to excite an odium against the Crown. For it was well known that his Majesty entertained a decided opinion that he could not, consistently with his coronation oath, give his sanction to a measure which, he conscientiously believed, would endanger the Established Church. The discussion, therefore, at this moment, could answer no good purpose. If, contrary to all probability, it had succeeded in Parliament, the King, no doubt, would have put his veto upon it, and have dissolved the Parliament. The consequences of such a measure it is needless to pourtray. Its principal supporters, in the Lords, were Lord Grenville, by whom the petition was introduced, Lords Spencer, Ormond, Holland, Longford, Hutchinson, Darnley, and King; and its most strenuous opposers, the Duke of Cumberland, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, Lords Redesdale, Ellenborough, Bolton, Auckland, Limerick, Hawkesbury, and Buckinghamshire.

Lord Grenville, and others, having drawn a melancholy picture of the state of the Irish Catholics, who, according to them, were exposed to persecution, an Irish nobleman, Lord Limerick, could not refrain from declaring, that, from these poetical descriptions, he had been almost led to imagine, that he had passed the greater part of his life in a dream; that Ireland, where he was born, and where he resided so many years, was not the kind of country he had considered it to be, and that all that had there passed before his eyes was merely a vision. He corrected Lord Grenville's assertion, that the Catholics of Ireland had suffered from party-violence, and party-prejudice; and truly stated that, from the year 1782, the records of the Irish Parliament exhibited one continued chain of indulgences, relaxations, grants of privileges, and admission of political rights, "till, at last, little indeed was left to bestow." His Lordship made some pertinent remarks on the symptoms of party-spirit evident in the selection of two *Englishmen,* to present a petition from the *Irish* Catholics, as if there were no *Irishmen* in both Houses on whom they could rely. In answer to Lord Grenville's observation, that this was the fittest time to present such a petition, and that he

esteemed that moment the happiest of his life, in which he had become the advocate of Catholic claims, the Earl of Limerick said, "I differ here from the noble Lord; our opinions are far as the poles asunder. What, my Lords, this the fittest time to agitate a question which rouses every passion, and calls into action every civil and religious prejudice; this the fittest time, when the united kingdom is assailed on all sides, by the most formidable enemies, and when, at the moment in which I am speaking, French emissaries are traversing Ireland in every direction, announcing an immediate invasion of that island, and promising to those who shall join them the establishment of their religion, and the property of those lands which they now hold as farmers? But the noble Lord says, that any evils which may arise will be imputable to those who reject the petition, not to those who bring it forward; that greater evils would have arisen from a refusal to present the petition, than any that can flow from an agitation of the subject; and that the Catholics eagerly called for its presentation. I lament that I must again differ from the noble Baron; I have some knowledge of that country, and, from every information which I have been able to obtain, I decidedly assert, *that the Catholics were not anxious to agitate the subject now*; that they did not think the time opportune; or that they were now likely to obtain their objects. If my information is accurate, I believe it will be found, that all the eagerness to agitate the subject was on this side of the water; and that *the Catholics were goaded on by representations from hence to bring forward their petition.* Lord Limerick fully exempted Lord Grenville from any imputation of a wish to promote anarchy, but expressed his firm belief, that there were men "so desperate as to value as nought a general convulsion, if they could worry a Minister, by bringing forward a subject, in the discussion of which they conceived he might be embarrassed by former declarations." His Lordship then burst out into a pathetic apostrophe to his country, which he stated to be the chosen arena on which political gladiators, and contending parties, struggled for victory.* At the close of his

* See Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, (May 10th, 1805, p. 723) which contains a more full and accurate report of all the speeches on this important question, than is to be found in any other collection.

speech, Lord Limerick directed the attention of the House to a part of the subject which, in the course of these discussions, appears to have been almost wholly overlooked. He reminded them, that the Catholic body were not the only description of persons whose feelings and interests were to be consulted upon this occasion. The Irish Protestants demanded, at least, equal regard. He believed, they were almost all adverse to the concession proposed. He entreated the House to respect the feelings of that body, who were ever true to their religion, faithful to their King, and enthusiastically attached to the British Constitution. "Descended from yourselves," said his Lordship, "in fighting valiantly their own battles, they have served your interests, and have prevented, by their exertions, that fair and beautiful island from being torn from the British Empire. In seeking new friends, whom possibly you may fail to conciliate, neglect not your old ones, but remain firm to those who have, in the worst of times, remained firm to you!" This admonition was salutary, and the House acknowledged its force. After the debate had been continued through two days, Lord Grenville's motion, for referring the petition to a committee, was rejected by the decisive majority of ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINE, only forty-nine having voted in favour of it, and one hundred and seventy-eight against it.

In the Commons, Mr. Fox stood forward as the advocate of the Papists, and manifested his usual zeal and ability in their defence. He was opposed by Dr. Duigenan, who displayed a profound knowledge of the subject, and demonstrated the danger of compliance with the prayer of the petition, by an explanation of the pernicious tenets of the Romish church, which were equally obligatory on modern as on ancient Papists. He affirmed, that the great majority of the Irish Parliament would never have agreed to an incorporating Union with Great Britain, if any hint had been given, or any suspicion entertained, that the present measure would be attempted after an Union had taken place. He called on the persons concerned, on the part of government, in conducting the business of the Union in the Irish Commons, to deny this fact, if they could. And he averred, for himself, that, instead of warmly supporting the measure of an Union in the Irish Parliament, he would have opposed it to the utmost of his power, had he suspected that such a measure as the

present would have been introduced into the Imperial Parliament, in the event of an Union; and he knew many members of the Imperial House of Commons who would have decidedly opposed it, had they had any suspicion of such a consequence resulting from it; in short, a great majority of the Irish Commons would have done so. One principal argument made use of by all the agents of government to the Irish members, to induce them to agree to an Union was, that all hostility of the British Cabinet to Irish Protestants, and all further encouragement and support of Irish Romanists, would for ever cease, on an Union between the two countries taking place, because all inducement to such a system of policy would then for ever cease. "Could any British subject," pursued the Doctor, "ever suspect that, in the reign of a Prince of the House of Brunswick, a measure would be proposed in a British Parliament, the attempt to adopt which cost the unhappy James II. his crown, expatriated him and his posterity, and caused a breach in the hereditary succession of our kings, always a serious evil in an hereditary monarchy? Astonishing, that what our kings could not even attempt with impunity, should be, after a lapse of one century, daringly attempted; and that, too, under the reign of a Prince, whose sole title to the crown rests on a principle directly adverse and opposite to the principle of this measure!"*

Dr. Duigenan was answered by Mr. Grattan, in an eloquent and animated speech, uninflated by any of that inflammable matter which distinguished most of his popular orations in his native country, but replete with the same perversion of historical facts, and exhibiting much of the same flimsy sophistry. Mr. Perceval and Mr. Alexander replied to Mr. Grattan. Mr. William Smith, an Unitarian himself, consistently enough, declared his enmity to tests. Sir William Scott opposed the motion, and Dr. Lawrence supported it. The latter defended a Popish

* Cobbett's Debates, May 13, p. 890, 891. As Dr. Duigenan's statement, respecting the conduct of government in promoting the Union, remained uncontradicted by any of those to whom he appealed, it is to be presumed that it was perfectly correct. If so, the promoters of the Union, if guilty of any breach of faith, broke their faith with the Irish Protestants, and certainly not with the Irish Romanists.

Bishop, Dr. Milner, (who has lately written in defence of a modern miracle, performed at St. Winifred's Well, in Wales, on the person of a poor Papist,*) from the attacks of the Attorney-General, who had quoted a passage from a tract, written by the Prelate about four years before, entitled, " The Case of Conscience solved, or Catholic Emancipation *proved* to be compatible with the Coronation Oath ;" in which he stated, " that every human law, and every promise, or other engagement, however confirmed by oath, must necessarily turn upon the cardinal virtue of prudence, which implies that it depends, as to the obligation of fulfilling it, on such and such circumstances, upon the question of expediency." This statement Dr. Lawrence did not hesitate to adopt. Considering, however, this as an abstract proposition, it is most false in itself, and most mischievous in its consequences. An oath is a compact, as it were, between man and his Creator ; and it is not for any human power, much less for the individual himself, to absolve him from the observance of it, under the specious pretexts of worldly prudence or expediency. It might well suit the policy of the Church of Rome, who aimed at acquiring an absolute ascendancy over the minds and actions of her bigotted votaries, to represent all oaths as conditional ; because, where any doubt arose, as to the expediency of fulfilling them, she knew that the reference must be made to herself ; and that it would afford her an additional means of extending her power, and of rivetting the chains of her slaves. This is not the place to enter upon a discussion of a subject which involves some of the most important considerations that can engage the attention, or affect the lasting interests, of man. But, even with the exceptions and qualifications which the Romish casuist introduced, and on which the learned Doctor descanted with equal confidence and delight, the doctrine is most objectionable. One of the cases in which a positive oath is to be subjected to this rule of expediency, is, " when the object obstructs any good evidently greater." Now, who is to be the judge of the comparative degree of good to result from the observance of an oath, and from the commission of perjury ? Either the Church of Rome, who usurps the power of absolution from oaths,

* This Bishop claims, for the members of his own church, the exclusive privilege of obtaining miracles in their favour ! A wonderful instance of christian humility !

and who has generally limited her exercise of it to cases in which her own interest would suffer from an observance of them; or the interested individual himself? In either case, the objections to this lax system of morality are insuperable. If a man shall once accustom himself to believe, that an oath is not, of necessity, binding, he will, very soon, reduce it to the condition of a common promise, either to be kept or violated, as interest, passion, or caprice may suggest. Away with such scholastic sophistry, such jesuitical morality, which renders divine obligations subservient to human passions, and makes man the judge, as it were, between himself and his Creator. If a doubt be once raised about the obligatory nature of an oath, by what tie can man be bound in cases in which his interest and his duty are placed in opposition to each other? What security can the rights and property, the lives and liberties, of individuals receive, if an oath be considered, not as a religious obligation, but as a kind of loose engagement, which *prudence* or *expediency* may dissolve?—There was, however, nothing out of character, in the conduct of a Popish Prelate, who, belonging to a Church which had assumed the power of absolving subjects from their oaths of allegiance, asserted the privilege of absolving a King from that oath, in virtue of which he commanded the allegiance of his subjects!

Mr. Foster, who had been Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, placed the question in a very plain and clear point of view. He stated the real situation of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, which had been represented as slavish and degraded, to be this—"They are as free as the Protestant, in the acquisition, in the enjoyment, and in the disposal, of property of every species; they can purchase land, settle their estates, and enjoy all the profits of commercial industry equally with him; they possess every benefit of civil liberty as fully as any other subjects. What, then, is the object of their petition?—Political power only." Mr. Foster made several judicious observations on the strange inconsistency of a Protestant King with a Popish Council; a Protestant Church, with Popish Legislators! And he shewed the weakness of the argument, deduced from the circumstance of Neckar and Sully having been Prime Ministers in Catholic France;—*they*, he observed, did not acknowledge the authority of a foreign power, which a Catholic does;—a

Popish state might safely trust a Protestant at the helm; for he acknowledges his supremacy; but a Protestant nation could not, with the same security, take a Catholic, who denied it. Besides, the examples were faulty in another respect. Sully's master was bred a Protestant, and only conformed to the established religion in appearance, to humour the prejudices of his subjects; a complacency, however, which did not secure him from the bigot's poniard. Of Neckar it is only necessary to state, that he ruined France!

Mr. Pitt, on this occasion, pursued the same line of argument which he had adopted, when the question had been formerly discussed. He denied any *right*, on the part of the Romanists, to a participation of political power, and he considered the question solely on the ground of *expediency*. He stated his opinion to be, that, previous to the Union, in no possible case could the privileges so demanded be given, consistently with a due regard to the Protestant interest in Ireland, to the internal tranquillity of that kingdom, the frame and structure of our Constitution, or the probability of the permanent connection of Ireland with this country. He admitted that, after the Union, he saw the subject in a different light; and was of opinion that, under an united Parliament, these privileges might be granted, with proper guards and conditions, so as not to produce any danger to the Established Church, or to the Protestant Constitution. He still retained the same opinion, and still thought, if, from other circumstances, there were no objection to a compliance with the demands of the Catholics; and if by a wish they could be carried into effect, that the introduction of a certain proportion of Catholics into the Imperial Parliament would not be likely to produce any influence or effect detrimental or injurious to the welfare of the State, or to the safety and security of the Constitution.

But in declaring this opinion, Mr. Pitt did not mean to shut his eyes against the conviction, that a Catholic, however honourable his intentions might be, must feel anxious to advance the interests of his religion; it was in the very nature of man; he might disclaim and renounce that wish for a time, but there was no man, who was at all acquainted with the operations of the human heart, who did not know, that the Catholics

must feel that anxiety, whenever the power and the opportunity might be favourable to him. Neither did he mean to say, that the Catholics were not engaged in the scenes preceding the rebellion of 1798; nor yet to deny, though Jacobin principles were the foundation of the rebellion, that the influence of the priests, themselves tainted with those principles, might have aggravated the evil, though they were not the cause of it. But Mr. Pitt expected to avert all danger by the adoption of his proposed measures of caution and security. He stated his idea to be, not to apply tests to the religious tenets of the Catholics, but tests applicable to what was the source and foundation of the evil, to render the priests, instead of making them the instruments of poisoning the minds of the people, dependent in some sort upon the government, and thus links, as it were, between the government and the people.*

By this declaration it would appear, that Mr. Pitt meant to bind those by interest whom he could not restrain by principle,—in other words, to bribe the priests to make the people loyal and peaceable;—or, rather, to make it their interest to discharge their duty, and to take care that their flocks followed their example, in good, as they had done in evil! But he never thought that it would be wise and prudent to throw down, rudely or abruptly, the guards and fences of the Constitution; yet he did think, that, if the system to which he had alluded had been deemed proper for adoption, it ought to have been accompanied with those checks and guards, and with every regulation, which could have given additional respect and influence to the Established Church, to the support and protection of the Protestant interests, and to the encouragement of every measure that could tend to propagate and spread the example of the Protestant religion.

But, in order to render such a measure effective, Mr. Pitt deemed a general concurrence of the community indispensably requisite. He meant it as a measure of peace and conciliation, which it could never be, unless it could gratify the wishes of one party, without awakening the fears, or exciting the jealousy, of the other. He saw no appearance

* See the Collection of Mr. Pitt's Speeches. Vol. IV. p. 438.

of such concurrence, at present, and, therefore, he thought that the discussion of the question could only tend to revive those dissensions which he wished to extinguish; to reproduce all that warmth and acrimony of discussion which had heretofore prevailed; and to excite those hopes which, if they were to be disappointed, might be productive of the greatest mischief. As to the chance of carrying the point at present, with general concurrence, of gratifying the Catholics without offending the Protestants, of confirming the affections of the one, without raising the suspicions and exciting the fears of the other, not only in Ireland but in England, he confessed there appeared to him to be none. He lamented, as much as any man, that the impression which now prevailed had taken place; many circumstances had combined to produce it, all of which were to be deplored. "I ask any gentleman," said Mr. Pitt, "whether he does not believe, looking to the opinions of the members of the Established Church, of the nobility, of the men of property, of the middling and respectable classes of society—I ask him, whether he does not believe, looking at the sentiments of the mass of the Protestants of this country and of Ireland, that there is the greatest repugnance to this measure, and that, even if it could now be carried, so far from producing conciliation and union, it would tend, on the contrary, to disappoint all the prospects of advantage, which, under other circumstances, might be derived from it? Even those gentlemen, who have argued most strongly in favour of this measure, have candidly confessed that, in the present state of men's minds, it is not likely to be carried. I am sure I shall not be contradicted when I say that, ever since the Union, this subject has, in a very considerable degree, attracted public attention, and that, of late, notwithstanding the other events which have occupied the public mind, it has been the subject of much conversation, both in public and in private, particularly since the Catholic petition has been presented, and since the Honourable Gentleman has given notice of his present motion; and I should disguise my real sentiments, if I did not say that, at present, the prevailing sentiment is strongly against this measure:—what circumstances may occur to overcome that sentiment, it is not for me to predict or conjecture."

In the course of the discussion, Sir George Hill, pursuing the spirit of

Mr. Pitt's opinion, but delivering his sentiments in language more plain and direct, questioned the sincerity of the persons who brought forward the measure at this period, and pronounced it "*a mere party-trick.*" He maintained that Mr. Fox knew full well, that obstacles insurmountable stood in the way of its success; that the Minister, after consulting the highest authority, and the judgment of the most experienced men around him, deemed it expedient to decline bringing it forward himself, and advised that it should not now be offered to Parliament. The leading and best-disposed Catholics themselves were believed to have holden the same sentiments as to the propriety of forbearing to press their claims for the present;—"but," said he, "I charge the Opposition, aided by the democratic part of the Catholics, with having overruled this determination, and forced forward the discussion."* In answer to Mr. Fox's observation, that the recal of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the breach of the promise which he had made to the Catholics, produced the rebellion of 1798, Sir George Hill remarked, that, in making such an assertion, he pronounced, on Mr. Grattan, the most bitter, heart-rending judgment, that could have fallen from the lips of a friend; for he thereby charged him with being the author of that rebellion. "I do positively," said he, "in proof of this, assert, and defy contradiction, that Lord Fitzwilliam was sent to Ireland with an instruction from the Cabinet of England, to keep back the Catholic claims; and further assert, that no authorised promise was made to them." He then proceeded to shew, that the Viceroy having acted contrary to his instructions, and Mr. Grattan having, in concert with his Excellency, urged forward the Catholic claims, Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled; and, therefore, if the rebellion were, as Mr. Fox asserted, the consequence of his recal, Mr. Grattan was certainly the author of it. The petition was ultimately rejected by three hundred and thirty-six votes against one hundred and twenty-four, leaving a majority of two hundred and twelve.

On the fourteenth of June, Mr. Whitbread brought forward a subject of complaint against Mr. Pitt, for having sanctioned the advance of £40,000, in the autumn of 1796, by Lord Melville, to the house of

* Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, May 14, 1805. P. 1010.

Boyd and Benfield, for the purpose of enabling them to make good their instalments on the loan for which they had contracted, and which had fallen so as to bear a discount of six per cent. The resolutions stated, that sufficient security was given for the payment of the money so advanced; and that it was actually repaid; and it was not pretended that any public loss or injury whatever had been sustained by the transaction. But it was censured as irregular, and deprecated as a precedent. Mr. Pitt justified himself to the perfect satisfaction of the House, and proved that he had no other motive for his conduct, on the occasion, than a wish to support public credit. The resolutions of Mr. Whitbread were accordingly rejected without a division, and, on the motion of Mr. Lascelles, it was "resolved, that the measure of advancing forty thousand pounds to Messrs. Boyd and Co. upon unquestionable securities, which have been regularly discharged, was adopted for the purpose of adverting consequences which might have proved highly injurious to the financial and commercial interests of the country; and, although not conformable to law, appeared at the time to be called for by the peculiar exigencies of public affairs!" A bill of indemnity, for this transaction, was afterwards brought in by Mr. Lascelles, and passed into a law.

Every effort of the Opposition to tarnish the reputation of Mr. Pitt, to diminish the confidence which the nation reposed in him, or to lessen the majorities which supported him in Parliament, having proved abhortive, recourse was now had to a measure which, it was hoped, would weaken his administration, by depriving him of the powerful assistance which he derived from the talents, the knowledge, and the experience of Lord Viscount Melville, who presided, with distinguished ability, over the important department of the navy. His Lordship had incurred the resentment of the Whig party, in a peculiar manner, by exposing the shameful inactivity of that Board, which had the Earl of St. Vincent for its President, in a debate which took place on the twenty-fourth of May, 1805, in consequence of a motion made by the Earl of Darnley, in the House of Lords, for a committee of enquiry into the state of the navy, the manifest object of which was to vindicate the character of Earl St. Vincent, at the expence not only of the character of Lord Melville, but

of the characters of all preceding First Lords of the Admiralty, Lord St. Vincent's system being peculiar to himself, and differing, of course, from all the systems observed before, as well as after, his administration. In his introductory speech, Lord Darnley, alluding to the sixth report of commissioners of naval inquiry, pointedly condemned "the criminal and atrocious instances of negligence, profusion, waste, and peculation, it exhibited."—And he arraigned, in the strongest terms of reproach, all those who had presumed to question the knowledge and capacity of Earl St. Vincent, whose friend he proclaimed himself, and who "had been termed, by some authority too, the greatest enemy the country ever saw."*

In his answer, Lord Melville took a succinct view of the state of the navy, in all its departments, at the time of his entrance into office; and proved, by authentic documents, that there were then in commission eighty-one ships of the line, of which thirty-seven might, probably, last five years, twenty-seven three years, and seventeen considered as fit only for home or limited service. But the return, on which this statement was founded, appeared to have been more favourable than correct; for although, in the ten months after Lord Melville had entered upon the duties of his office, ten or eleven additional ships of the line had been put in commission, they did not increase the number of effective ships, as they only sufficed to replace those which had been put out of commission in consequence of being unfit for further service. On the fifteenth of May, 1804, there were only six ships of the line building, one of which was laid down in 1802, another in January, 1803, a third in November, 1803, a fourth in 1802, and two which had been laid down so far back as the year 1792. Of these six ships, three were *expected* to be finished in 1803, one in 1806, and another in 1807. From this statement it became evident, that the *vigilant*, and *active*, and *able* administration of Earl St. Vincent had, from February, 1801, to May, 1804, ordered five ships of the line to be built in the King's yards, and two in the merchants' yards. But when inquiry was made into the state of the ships, so ordered to be built in the King's yards, it

* Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, May 24th, 1805, p. 81.

was found that not even the keel of any one of them had been laid down; and the reason assigned for this delay was, that the ships could not be proceeded on without more materials, and more hands.* The report made to the Admiralty, respecting the state of the two ships in the merchants' yards, was merely that they were building, without stating what progress had been made. A remedy was applied, by Lord Melville, to this alarming evil, by having immediate recourse to the merchants' yards, in imitation of Lord Sandwich, Lord Keppel, Lord Howe, Lord Chatham, and Lord Spencer. Such was the success attending Lord Melville's exertions, that he was enabled to state to the House, on the day of this debate, from papers submitted to their Lordships, that measures had been taken, by which no less than twenty-six ships of the line were to be added to the strength of the fleet before the month of September, 1805. This addition, with seven ships still in the merchants' yards, and two new ships to be launched at Deptford and Woolwich, would make the whole force amount, then, in ships of the line, to near one hundred and twenty sail, a force not only adequate to our wants at home, but sufficiently numerous to guard our foreign possessions also.† Lord St. Vincent said but little in reply, but he maintained the practicability of building *ten* ships of the line *annually*, in the King's yards; and seemed to assign the scanty provision of timber as the reason for not having had *one* built during the three years that he was in power.‡ As to the personal attack on himself, which he conceived Lord Melville to have made, he said, he should treat it with the contempt which it deserved. The House rejected the motion for the inquiry, by a majority of fifty-five, *eighty-eight* having voted against it, and *thirty-three* for it.

* Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, May 24th, 1805, p. 82.

† Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, May 24th, 1805, p. 94. This speech of Lord Melville is replete with curious and interesting matter; and it affords the best means of ascertaining the comparative merits of the two naval administrations, that of his Lordship, and that of his predecessor.

‡ Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, May 24th, 1805, p. 98.

The commissioners of naval inquiry, adverted to in the course of this debate, were appointed, during the naval administration of Lord St. Vincent, chiefly at his suggestion, and, of course, were men not adverse to his Lordship's system, principles, and conduct. Sir Charles Pole, the constant friend and advocate of his Lordship, was placed at the head of the commission; the other members were Mr. Evan Law, Mr. John Ford, Mr. Henry Nicholls, and Mr. William Mackworth Praed. On the thirteenth of February, these commissioners published their tenth report on the office of Treasurer of the Navy, which was made the subject of inquiry in the House of Commons, and, ultimately, the ground of an impeachment of Lord Viscount Melville, for high crimes and misdemeanours, in the execution of his office of Treasurer of the Navy.

With regard to the merits of this case, it is sufficient to know that, after the fullest investigation, Lord Melville was acquitted of every one of the charges which had been preferred against him by the House of Commons: But the previous proceedings against this nobleman are of so extraordinary a nature, and they affect, so deeply, some of the most valuable right of Englishmen—rights, the security of which is the main scope of the British Constitution, that it would be unpardonable in the historian of the period in which they occurred to pass them over without observation.

The most striking feature of the case is, that Lord Melville, who was acquitted by the highest Court of Judicature in the kingdom, of every one of the charges, which the most astute ingenuity could find any pretext for preferring against him, for misconduct and malversation in his office of Treasurer of the Navy, had been previously pronounced, by the House of Commons, guilty of very gross misconduct in that office.

This proceeding took place on the eighth of April, 1805, when Mr. Whitbread moved a string of resolutions, one of which (the eleventh) was couched in the following words:—"That the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Melville having been privy to, and connived at, the withdrawing from the Bank of England, for purposes of private interest or emolument, sums issued to him as Treasurer of the Navy, and placed to

his account in the Bank, according to the provisions of the 25th Geo. 3. c. 31, has been guilty of a gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty."

The resolutions, of which the foregoing formed a part, were carried by a majority of one. The effect of this proceeding was most severely penal. Of all the things that are most estimable in social life, the most estimable, beyond all comparison, is A GOOD NAME! With the jewel reputation, what is there, however highly prized, that can, in point of value, enter into competition? compared with this, life itself, though accompanied with all the other advantages that can render it desirable, dwindles into utter insignificance. Nay, without this jewel, life becomes, to a mind properly formed, one of the heaviest burdens which it can fall to the lot of humanity to support. The vote of the House of Commons had the effect of instantaneously fixing a stain on the reputation of Lord Melville, which even his subsequent acquittal by the House of Lords has been unable entirely to remove. It exposed him to the finger of scorn, from one end of the empire to the other. It excited the public indignation against him in a degree, perhaps, unequalled in this country. Nay, what is worst of all, with the exception of a discerning few, it deeply injured him in the opinion even of the candid and impartial part of the nation, who, forgetting that he had not been tried, could not believe it possible for the House of Commons to pass such a resolution against a man who was not guilty of the charge therein contained. And although, happily for Lord Melville, his Lordship has since been brought regularly to his trial, and acquitted, by his Peers, of all the articles of impeachment exhibited against him, one of which (the third) contained the precise charge, of which the House of Commons had assumed that he was guilty;—" that of being privy to, and conniving at, the application of monies withdrawn from the Bank of England" to " purposes of private advantage, or interest, profit, and emolument;" on which assumption the House had declared, " that he was guilty of a gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty;"—although such an acquittal has been the result of a full and deliberate investigation of the case, on a partial view of which the House of Commons so precipitately decided,—still the prejudice which has been excited against his Lordship,

by the vote of that House, is not, and probably never will be, entirely done away.

There cannot be a stronger proof of the effect here ascribed to this extraordinary proceeding, than the very remarkable circumstance that his Lordship, instead of being instantly restored, as it was reasonable to expect he would be, to all the offices before held by him under the Crown, has not, to this hour, been restored to the rank of Privy Counsellor to his Sovereign, from which, as well as from those offices, he was removed, because he was under accusation, or rather in consequence of the inculpatory resolutions of the House of Commons. Nor should it be forgotten, that the effect of that vote has operated most injuriously with regard to the public, by depriving it so long of the benefit of his Lordship's great and extraordinary abilities, as a member of administration. If the whole of the proceedings against him had consisted of his impeachment and acquittal, it can scarcely be doubted, that at a period when a mind like his was so much wanted to assist in directing the weighty affairs of State, and, in some degree, to supply the dreadful chasm which has been produced by the loss of the only Statesman whose mind was equal to such an emergency; it can scarcely be doubted that, in the case supposed, his Lordship would, instantly, upon his acquittal, have been restored to the Privy Council, and that he would, long ere this, have filled a very high department in administration. It is the stigma which was fixed upon him by the House of Commons, that has prevented either of these events from taking place, though it cannot escape observation, that the vote of that House could not have so operated, without the co-operation of those, whose duty it was to advise the restoration of Lord Melville, at least to that station of honour and usefulness from which he was removed, only in consequence of, as the result has proved, a condemnation as unjust as it was irregular.

These consequences, cruel beyond description, as they affect Lord Melville, and inexpressibly injurious, as they affect the State, were, it should be remembered, the result of a single vote of the House of Commons;—a vote hastily passed at the close of an intemperate discussion, and in the production of which party feelings had, at least, a consider-

able share. Indeed, the connection which the question, on that occasion, had with the great object of party,—the removal of the existing administration,—was clearly disclosed by Mr. Fox, immediately after the passing of the resolutions. That gentleman, eager to pursue the triumph, and to involve Ministers in the fate of Lord Melville, opposed the postponement, for a few days, of a motion of Mr. Whitbread, for an address to his Majesty, to remove Lord Melville from his councils; and he exclaimed, rather unguardedly, it must be owned, that he could not consent to a proposition which would leave to the House the chance of meeting again, without having taken any step *to remove a* DISGRACED *administration.*

But the part of this case, which is most deserving of consideration, is the circumstance, that the condemnation of Lord Melville, by the House of Commons, took place in his Lordship's absence, without his being heard in his own defence, or having any opportunity afforded him of vindicating himself against the charge on which the resolution, containing that condemnation, was founded; and even without any evidence being called to the bar of the House to substantiate that charge. In this point of view, indeed, the case called for the most serious consideration of every British subject, for it furnishes a precedent well calculated to excite the alarm of every one who has any regard for the British Constitution. Of all the privileges enjoyed under that constitution, the most valuable is the security which it affords to every individual, of whatever rank or station, that he shall not be found guilty of any charge without a hearing,—that is, *without a fair and impartial trial.*

This privilege is even more valuable than the protection which the constitution affords to all who live under it, against every kind of despotism on the part of government. For the instances in which individuals are liable to be sensibly injured by a despotic use of the powers of government are few, and of rare occurrence; and they are scarcely ever to be found in the private walks of life. But every individual, at all times, wants the protection, which can be afforded only by a fair and an impartial administration of justice. Indeed, where justice is well administered, the powers of government, though despotic in their form,

and free from other necessary checks, are subject to so efficient a control, that they can seldom be exercised for the purpose of individual oppression. To secure this, its favourite object, an impartial administration of justice, the constitution has made it an essential principle of its judicial polity, that no person shall be condemned unheard. Trial by jury, which is also a grand mean for the attainment of the same end, as being most admirably calculated to ensure to the accused a fair trial, is, in various instances of minor delinquency, dispensed with. But the principle that the accused shall be heard before he can be condemned, admits of no dispensation, no exception, no qualification. It can in no instance be departed from without a violation of the constitution. This principle is, indeed, so obviously deducible from the first rudiments of universal justice, that any judicial code, which should fail to recognize it, would be radically defective.—But it is peculiar to the British Constitution to give full effect to this principle, which it professes to hold sacred and inviolable.

It is, however, undeniable that, in the case of Lord Melville, the above principle was violated. In that case, an accused individual was condemned unheard.—Lord Melville was pronounced, by the House of Commons, to be guilty of a gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty, without a hearing,—without a trial,—without being called upon, in any way, to answer the charges on which so severe a sentence was founded,—without being even informed that such charges were preferred against him.

It will hardly be pretended, that the operation of the principle in question is confined to the ordinary administration of justice, and that the House of Commons has a constitutional right to dispense with it, by proceeding to condemnation without a hearing of the party accused, or without affording him any opportunity for self-defence. If this be the case, then is the principle itself a mere cypher. For its value depends upon the universality of its operation, in the security which it affords to all persons under all possible circumstances, and against every possible species of power, whether regal, aristocratical, democratical, or judicial. If, in any case, it be inadequate to afford protection, then is there no

effectual bulwark secured to the dearest liberties, to the most sacred rights, of the subject.

But of all the powers and authorities in the state, there is no one in which an exemption from the obligation of this principle would involve so gross a violation of the constitution, or be fraught with so much danger to the rights and liberties of the subject, as the House of Commons. That House which superintends all inferior jurisdictions, is itself amenable to no jurisdiction whatever. It is the sole judge of its own proceedings, which are, therefore, superior to controul, and against which, though productive of the grossest injustice, there is no redress. It is also a democratical body, a popular assembly, and, consequently, liable to that sudden effervescence of passion, to which such bodies and assemblies are particularly exposed, and which, indeed, is one of their characteristic qualities. It is, further, the great scene of party-contention, and party-feelings are apt to mix themselves, more or less, with all its proceedings. But the influence to which the House of Commons is subject from without, particularly disqualifies it for an absolute and unqualified exercise of judicial powers. Its members, such of them, at least, as are returned by means of popular election, are constantly looking forward to the period when they shall again solicit the suffrages of their constituents. To ensure those suffrages they will ever feel a strong inducement to gratify popular feelings; and every one, who is at all acquainted with human nature, must know, that the readiest way to produce that effect is, to display an eagerness to detect abuses, and to hold forth the persons, who are but even suspected of them, to public indignation. Whenever, therefore, an individual is charged with any species of delinquency, which is calculated to agitate the public mind—ever ready to condemn without proof—the House of Commons is the very last place in the world in which he is likely to enjoy the advantage of a fair trial. Such a person is there exposed, and, unless a seat happens to afford him an opportunity of self-defence, absent, and defenceless, to all the violence of popular feeling,—perhaps to all the bitterness of party-resentment, eager to avenge exertions which may have merited the gratitude of the country.—While Ministers, with all their weight and influence, may be unable to stem the torrent of prejudice and clamour,

or may fear to lose, in the attempt, that popularity which is the prop and support of their power.

The constitution, it must be observed, is not chargeable with the anomaly of investing a body of men, so constituted, and so exposed to the very worst kind of influence, with judicial powers, except in the single instance of the election of its own members. The House of Commons is not to be found in any enumeration of the courts of justice known to this country. It does not even possess the power of applying an oath to the conscience of any individual, a power, the exercise of which is the main spring of the administration of justice. Powers of investigation it certainly possesses, and that to a very great extent; and such powers are essential to its grand function of accusation, by impeachment before the House of Lords. But it is clear that this function, which is precisely analogous to that of a grand jury, authorizes it only to inquire and accuse, but not to condemn. And whenever, instead of confining itself to inquiry, with a view to impeachment, it proceeds, as in the case of Lord Melville, to convict, or which is, in effect, the same thing, to censure, it exceeds its province, and violates the constitution. The House of Commons has also the power of inquiring into abuses;—a power, which seems rather to have grown into usage, than to be founded in any settled, or original, principle, peculiarly applicable to the representatives of the people. But as the object of this power is the controul and correction of abuses, and the redress of grievances, it by no means authorizes the assumption of judicial functions, and it should never be allowed to trench upon the administration of justice, criminal or civil. It is of the utmost importance that all authorities, of whatever nature, should, in practice, keep within the bounds prescribed to them by the constitution. No despotism is so hostile to liberty as that of indefinite power. And such power is infinitely more to be dreaded in a popular assembly than in a monarch. The Commons should, therefore, take care lest they be tempted, by their freedom from restraint, and their exemption from responsibility, to consider themselves as judges in the cases which may come before them in their inquisitorial character. They should remember that they cannot constitutionally pronounce either upon the guilt, or the civil rights, of any individual.—And if they suffer

themselves to assume judicial functions, they will not only violate the constitution, but also invite so many applications to them, under the pretext of inquiry, that a function, which was given them to be exercised only on extraordinary occasions, will, by its perversion and abuse, encroach upon the ordinary duties, which are the main object of their institution; and, as has been said, by a writer too well known to be named,—*the medicine of the constitution will become its daily bread.*

But it has been said, that the sacred maxim of justice, so dear to the British Constitution, was not violated in the case of Lord Melville; that his Lordship was not condemned unheard; that, on the contrary, he had a full hearing,—a fair opportunity of self-defence,—before the commissioners of naval inquiry, whose report was the ground-work of the censure passed upon him by the resolutions of the House of Commons. Is then this grand and fundamental maxim of universal justice, that no one should be condemned unheard, satisfied, if the party be heard before one tribunal, and condemned by another? Rather, is it not a mockery of justice so to construe that maxim, or to suppose it capable of any other meaning than, that the party must have a fair opportunity of meeting the charge, and those, by whom it is preferred, in the very tribunal in which it is to be decided; that he must there have every facility afforded him of convincing those who are to be his judges, that he ought not to be found guilty of what is alleged against him? In this sense, certainly Lord Melville had not a hearing.

The Romans seem to have had far more correct notions upon this subject than appear to prevail in our House of Commons. We are told, by high authority, that *it was not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die before he, which was accused, had the accuser face to face, and had license to answer for himself, concerning the crime laid against him.*—Acts xxv. 16. This was the nature of a hearing *de jure Romano.* But Lord Melville was consigned to the most cruel pangs of reproach and obloquy, far more painful than death itself, without being allowed to *face an accuser,* without *having license to answer for himself,* in the assembly by which he was pronounced guilty; nay, without being apprized that *any crime was laid against him.*

But the commissioners of naval inquiry were, in no respect, constituted a tribunal. They were not even a tribunal of accusation. They were appointed to *inquire and examine into irregularities, frauds, or abuses, in certain departments,* and this solely with a view to reform; for which purpose they were authorized *to report such observations as should occur to them for preventing such irregularities, frauds, and abuses, and for the better conducting and managing the business, of such departments.* This was the object for the sake of which they were authorized to examine the persons who should be called before them. Can it be pretended, that a person examined, respecting his own conduct in office, before these commissioners, had a hearing, in any sense of the word in which it can be understood, for the purposes of individual justice, as affording the party accused an opportunity of exculpating himself from the accusation preferred against him? To say that he had such a hearing, because he had an opportunity of saying any thing he pleased in explanation of his conduct, is as gross a fallacy as can be employed to insult the human understanding. Had a party, so examined, any opportunity of hearing the evidence against him; Could he subject that evidence to cross examination? Was he called upon to produce evidence, if any he had to produce, in his own behalf? Nay, had he any notice that he was on his trial? Had he any intimation given him that a charge was preferred, or was to be preferred, against him? Instead of all this, the whole of which is necessary, in this country at least, to constitute a trial, did not the examination of Lord Melville (which was the only proceeding previously to the vote of censure in which he had an opportunity of being heard) consist altogether of interrogatories on the part of the commissioners, and of answers thereto from the party under examination? Could it be supposed, that answers drawn forth in such a manner would afterwards be converted into matter of charge? Could a proceeding so glaringly incompatible, not only with British justice, but with every system and principle of justice, be apprehended? Could it be supposed that, in this country, a person would be thus inveigled and entrapped into self-accusation? Such, however, was the course of proceeding in Lord Melville's case. The examinations, taken before commissioners, appointed solely for the reform of abuses, which examinations must, therefore, have been

presumed by the parties subjected to them to have had no other object than such reform, were made to furnish grounds of accusation against one of the parties.

But a still worse feature in that case presents itself to notice. The legislature, abhorrent from every approach towards a violation of the maxim, *nemo tenetur seipsum accusare*, endeavoured to provide against the possibility that any person, examined by the commissioners, should be drawn into any answer which might involve a criminiation of himself. In the act, therefore, by which the commissioners were appointed, was a clause, authorizing all persons, examined before them, to decline answering any questions which might be put to them. In some instances, Lord Melville availed himself of this privilege, not because, by his answers to the questions proposed, he might criminate himself, but on grounds of a very different nature, and which he fully explained to the commissioners. That very circumstance was, however, turned against him; and the exercise of a right, which was expressly granted for the purpose of preserving persons in his situation from furnishing evidence against themselves, was not only made the means of exciting a strong prejudice against his Lordship, but was even converted into a presumption of his guilt, in that mock trial in the House of Commons, which took place in his absence, and which terminated in his condemnation.

It is not meant to be here maintained, that discoveries of frauds, when produced by such examinations, should never be followed by the prosecution of the guilty parties. The interest of the State requires that public delinquency, however discovered, when the case is sufficiently gross, and capable of being brought home to the offender, should be subjected to condign punishment. But it is far better that such delinquency should escape with impunity, than that those principles, which form the very land-marks of the Constitution, should be trampled upon. Guilt, when detected, should be put into a regular course of investigation; incidental discoveries should be made the ground of further inquiry; and the party should be presumed to be innocent until found to be guilty, after a regular trial before the proper tribunal. But, let not any one be ensnared into an accusation of himself—let not that

silence which the law allows, and even encourages, him to observe, as a preservative against all danger of this kind, be converted into a presumption of guilt; above all things, let him not be condemned without a hearing—that is without a full opportunity of self-defence, against a formal and explicit charge duly and regularly preferred. To ensure all this, let every proceeding, at all connected with the administration of justice, pass before the regularly constituted tribunals. No person should be judicially affected in his character or his rights, but in the regular course of justice. There cannot be a grosser abuse than for bodies of men, appointed for very different purposes, to assume censorial or judicial powers. When commissioners, or committees, nominated with a view to reform or economy, become the accusers of the persons whom, for the sake of obtaining those objects, they are obliged to examine, they not only step out of their province, but are guilty of the most unconstitutional abuse of the powers vested in them. Their censure is swallowed with such extreme avidity by the public, that it is scarcely possible to remove the prejudice thereby excited;—even an injurious insinuation, coming from such a quarter, and following what is fallaciously supposed to be a regular investigation, is sufficient to open the flood-gates of calumny upon the best characters, and to overwhelm the reputation of those who have not been legally proved to have done any thing deserving of reproach. It is, therefore, much to be feared, lest such commissioners and committees, perceiving how much their own popularity depends upon the quantum of abuse with which they can gratify some of the worst passions of the public, may be tempted, by the pursuit of so fascinating an object, incautiously to sacrifice the credit and character of the individuals whose conduct and transactions are submitted to their investigation; and lest, in the ardour of such a pursuit, overlooking not only candour, but even truth and justice, they may, however pure their intentions, be insensibly drawn on from error to misrepresentation, and at length be guilty both of the *suppressio veri* and the *suggestio falsi*. To preserve them from the temptation of acting in such a manner, they should confine themselves to the objects for the sake of which they are instituted.

When such bodies employ the powers with which they are entrusted

in an inquisitorial manner—when they convert the answers which they themselves have drawn from the individuals examined before them into grounds of inculpation, and thereby expose those individuals to public indignation, they are the occasion of far greater abuses than any which they are appointed to correct. They then become an inquisition of the very worst kind; one which extorts from persons whom the law presumes to be innocent, and who, probably, if regularly put upon their trial, would (like Lord Melville) prove to be so, not proofs, but presumptions, of guilt—presumptions, too, which, by such a course of proceeding, are made to have all the effects of proofs. Practices of this nature tend also to frustrate the very objects for which such bodies are instituted, and the attainment of which is of incalculable importance. Those objects, indeed, involve the best modes of reform. They secure the ends of punishment without its rigour. They operate by means of prevention, without the severity of example. But they can be attained only by a calm, patient, *undeviating*, pursuit. If, however, instead of steadily adhering to such a course, the only one which affords a chance of success, boards of inquiry assume the character of inquisitors and accusers, they will render themselves odious and intolerable, they will forfeit the public confidence, and they will close those channels of information, through which alone they can hope to render any effectual service to the State. Such boards, acting in such a manner, may terrify, but they will not reform. They may harass, but they will not correct. And they will deprive the public of the service of men of real respectability, who would not chuse to be subjected to an investigation, before which the best character is no security, and innocence itself an ineffectual protection.

How far the foregoing observations are exemplified in the case of Lord Melville, is a question which must be left to the decision of the intelligent reader. Certain it is, that, in that case, the resolution of the House of Commons of the time, pronouncing his Lordship guilty of a gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty, was a violation of the first principles of justice, and of the most sacred maxims of the Constitution. Happily—may it not be said providentially?—the result displays, in the most striking and impressive manner, the danger of a

departure from established forms. The nobleman, in whose instance those forms were sacrificed, and who was, in consequence, most deeply wounded in those feelings which are ever most acute in minds that are most susceptible of virtue and honour—feelings, the anguish of which, in such minds, renders even martyrdom an enviable lot;—this nobleman, upon a full and regular investigation of his case, was acquitted of all the charges preferred against him, and, in particular, of that very charge of which the House of Commons had assumed him to be guilty, and which that House made the foundation of a vote of censure, alike unjust, cruel, and unmerited.

Let it not, however, be supposed, that the mischief of such proceedings is confined to the individuals who immediately suffer from them. They are inexpressibly injurious to the best interests of the State, and they tend ultimately to its subversion. All constituted authorities, however high, the Commons, as well as the Lords and the King, are morally bound to respect the principles of the Constitution; and this *moral* obligation is particularly binding upon the House of Commons, on account of its peculiar character and functions, as the grand bulwark of freedom, and defender of the rights of the subject, to which those principles are inseparably allied. Such, indeed, are the real value and importance of that House, so essential is it to the secure existence of genuine freedom, so necessary is it as a restraint upon power, and a check to corruption, that, to maintain its just privileges should be an object of the utmost solicitude to every lover of the Constitution. But, if that House, availing itself of its high and uncontrollable powers, and of its irresponsible situation, should act arbitrarily and oppressively, and invade those rights of which it professes to be the vigilant defender, then would it give a mortal wound to that Constitution which it was intended to preserve and to perpetuate; then would it prove, not the guardian, but the subverter—not the sanctuary, but the tomb, of liberty.

The conduct which Mr. Pitt observed, on this trying occasion, when the object of prosecution was a nobleman endeared to him by long habits of friendship, the most sincere, the most ardent, and the most confidential; by congeniality of principle, and, in many respects, by

similarity of disposition, as well as of pursuits, was most manly and most honourable. And, had his judicious advice been adopted, the House of Commons would have been spared the shame, and the disgrace, of condemning a man without a hearing, of punishing him without a trial, and of pronouncing a sentence, the injustice of which was proclaimed by the solemn decision of the first Court of Judicature in the kingdom. Mr. Pitt, on the eighth of April, proposed, "that a select committee be appointed to consider the tenth report of the commissioners of naval inquiry, and the documents therewith connected; that they examine the same, and report their opinion thereon to the House." This motion, however, or rather that which was preparatory to it, and which was the same thing in effect, was rejected; the numbers being equal for and against it; two hundred and sixteen; and the Speaker's casting vote having turned the balance against Lord Melville.* Mr. Pitt, however, so far conformed to what he found to be the sense of a bare majority of the House of Commons, as to advise the King to erase the name of Lord Melville from the list of his privy counsellors; (Lord Melville having previously resigned his office of First Lord of the Admiralty) and had he lived to witness the acquittal of his Lordship, from all the charges, he would, no doubt, have felt it to be his imperative duty to advise his Majesty to restore Lord Melville to every situation and office which he held before his trial, because justice to the noble Lord's character required such a step, and because the interests of the State demanded it. On the twenty-fifth of June, the last discussion, upon this subject, took place, when it was proposed to substitute the mode of proceeding by im-

* By what kind of parliamentary casuistry, I know not, the Speaker was induced, it has been said, to give his vote *against the Minister*, in conformity to some *etiquette* or custom—Custom, in my opinion, "more honoured in the breach than in the observance;" at least, on the present occasion. As this was a *criminal* case, the resolutions being intended as the ground-work of the criminal proceeding which followed, I should have thought it more becoming the character and duty of the Speaker, as, indeed, of any member of the British Senate, then acting, in some respects, as a grand jury, to turn the scale, agreeably to a fixed principle of British jurisprudence, in favour of *mercy*. The Speaker could not have been actuated by a more laudable motive; and had he suffered it to influence his conduct, he would have spared the House all that self-reproach which it would be a libel on its character not to believe it experienced, when it found that it had acted without proof, and contrary to fact.

peachment, to that before resolved on, by a criminal information by the Attorney-General. The proposal was resisted by Mr. Fox, and supported by Mr. Pitt; and it was carried by one hundred and sixty-six votes against one hundred and forty-three. This was the last discussion in which Mr. Pitt took a part.

In the debates on this question, the Addingtonian party, if that could be called a party which consisted of a small circle of Mr. Addington's friends and relatives, voted against Mr. Pitt. Mr. Addington himself had been created Viscount Sidmouth, at the commencement of the year 1805, preparatory to his introduction to office; and he immediately succeeded the Duke of Portland (who retired) as Lord President of the Council, while the Earl of Buckinghamshire received the Duchy of Lancaster, and some others of his friends were provided for. It is far from my intention to impute to Lord Sidmouth, in the part which he took in the prosecution of Lord Melville, any selfish motive, or any sinister intent. But certain it is, that, as soon as Lord Melville had resigned the situation of First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Sidmouth made application to Mr. Pitt to appoint his friend Lord Buckinghamshire to that office. Mr. Pitt expressed himself with respect towards the object of this application, but, not deeming Lord Buckinghamshire qualified for so important a situation, and having Lord Barham, a man of experience and knowledge, in his eye, sent a polite refusal to Lord Sidmouth. His Lordship, however, who appears to have entertained an high idea of his own consequence, after he became Premier, and had been again admitted to office, and who probably placed a very high value on his own services, resented this refusal, and actually sent in his own resignation, and that of Lord Buckinghamshire, which he desired Mr. Pitt to lay before the King. A little reflection, however, or some seasonable advice, soon convinced Lord Sidmouth of his error, and, in terms less haughty, and more conciliatory, he requested permission of Mr. Pitt to recall the proffered resignations, and intreated him to consign what had passed to oblivion. With this request, that *good nature*, which Mr. Pitt possessed in an eminent degree, and which rendered resentment and enmity strangers to his bosom, induced him to yield a too-ready compliance. But it was not to be supposed that Lord Sid-

mouth, after such a transaction, would cordially co-operate with Mr. Pitt; and, indeed, he appears only to have courted a reconciliation for the purpose of leaving office with a better grace, and on a pretext more likely to conciliate that popular favour, which he was always most anxious to court, and most sedulous to obtain. The difference of opinion between himself and Mr. Pitt, on the subject of Lord Melville's prosecution, afforded this pretext, though it cannot escape observation, that if that difference justified a resignation, it ought to have taken place in the first instance; but, it is pretty well understood that Lord Sidmouth carefully concealed his opinion, and intention, from the Cabinet, and none were more surprized at the part which he took than the Ministers themselves. Be this as it may, Lord Sidmouth and Lord Buckinghamshire sent in their resignations again, on the tenth of July, when they were accepted, without hesitation or regret, and the former was succeeded by Earl Camden, and the latter by Lord Harrowby. There was not one of his political friends, perhaps, who afforded Mr. Pitt more reason to complain of his conduct than Lord Sidmouth. With the exception of some acts, at the commencement of his Lordship's administration, his conduct to Mr. Pitt, by whom he had been raised from private obscurity to public eminence, was marked by none of those features by which, on every account, it ought to have been strongly distinguished.

The domestic events of this summer were by no means such as to assist Mr. Pitt in bearing up against the attacks of disease, with which he had long been assailed. For more than four years, he had laboured under all the inconveniences resulting from a weak stomach, and the consequent failure of appetite. And it will be easily conceived, that mental anxiety was peculiarly calculated to aggravate the effects of such a disorder. The gradual decline of his health could not have escaped the observation of his friends; and it is to be feared, that it was allowed to have an influence on the recent conduct of some of them. The discussion on Lord Melville's business, on the twenty-fifth of June, 1805, may be said to have closed his parliamentary life, as it was the last time he delivered his sentiments in the Senate.

The unprosperous state of affairs on the Continent tended to increase the anxiety of Mr. Pitt's mind. The continued encroachments of Buonaparté, who, not content with usurping the imperial dignity in France, had assumed the crown of Italy, and annexed Genoa to his vast empire, had roused the spirits of the Austrians, and enabled Mr. Pitt to give life and vigour to a new confederacy against the colossal power of France. A treaty was concluded between Russia and England, to which Austria and Sweden soon acceded. The object of this treaty was to restore, in some degree, the balance of power in Europe; by driving the French out of Hanover and the North of Germany; by establishing the independence of Holland and Switzerland; by restoring the King of Sardinia to his throne and territory; and by compelling the French to evacuate the kingdom of Naples, and the whole of Italy. The means by which it was proposed to accomplish this great and desirable object was, an army of half a million of effective men, independently of the forces to be employed by Great Britain herself. This treaty was signed at St. Petersburgh, on the eleventh of April. It developed a system of foreign policy, liberal, comprehensive, and grand. And had the Continental powers performed their part of the engagement, by supplying the stipulated force, there can be little doubt that the result would have been favourable to the independence of Europe. Providence, however, had otherwise determined. The campaign, which was opened late in September, proved short, disastrous, and decisive. The cowardly surrender of an Austrian army, at Ulm, by General Mack, paved the way for further successes; and the battle of Austerlitz, fought on the second of December, at which the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and the Corsican usurper, were present, completed the triumph of the French arms. The Austrian Emperor, dismayed by a loss, which he might easily, and soon, have repaired, solicited an immediate armistice, which was granted, the very night of the battle, on terms so disgraceful to himself, that his Imperial Ally, Alexander, refused to become a party to them. This was followed by the peace of Presburgh, signed on the twenty-sixth of December, which dissolved this new confederacy, and defeated the last hopes of Mr. Pitt. By that treaty Austria signed her own exclusion from Italy, and consented to an important loss of dominion in Germany. She sacrificed to her fears, her faithful subjects of

the Tyrol and the Voralberg, who were consigned, much against their will, to the crowned vassal of Bavaria, as a reward for his desertion of the lawful head of the empire, and for his attachment to the general enemy of the civilized world.

France having, at the opening of the campaign, violated the neutral territory of Anspach, now belonging to Prussia, the Prussian Monarch exhibited some marks of resentment, which induced Mr. Pitt to send Lord Harrowby to Berlin, in the hope of persuading Frederick-William to join the confederacy against France. The vacillating policy of that Monarch defeated this attempt; and, while it deprived himself of the only opportunity for restoring the fallen fortunes of Europe, by imposing an effectual check on the encroaching spirit of France, left to Mr. Pitt only the consciousness of having exerted every effort in *his* power to produce that effect.

Such exertions as depended, exclusively, on Great Britain, were eminently successful. In every quarter her fleets drove the enemy before them and vindicated her right to rule,—the mistress of the sea. On the twenty-first of October, Lord Nelson sealed his glory with his life, at the memorable battle of Trafalgar, which inflicted a mortal blow on the navies of France and Spain. In the East, too, the British arms had been invariably successful, under the auspices of a nobleman, possessed of every quality of the heart and mind, which can impart wisdom to council, and energy to action;—a nobleman, who, during an arduous administration of seven years, extended the territory, enlarged the resources, and confirmed the security, of the British Empire; who, by wise and salutary regulations, adapted to the genius, the manners, and the habits, of the people, meliorated their condition, and opened to them the sources of comfort and happiness; who subdued, with apparent facility, difficulties, from which an ordinary mind would have shrunk with dismay; who, amidst the bustle and anxieties of war, and the multiplied obstacles interposed by ignorant and interested opponents, erected a noble establishment, for the advancement of religious, scientific, and literary knowledge; and who, by his whole conduct, justified

the opinion which Mr. Pitt entertained of him, and the confidence which he reposed in him.*

Mr. Pitt's health experienced a rapid decline, in the autumn of 1805; and he was recommended to go to Bath, having, in a former illness, derived great benefit from the waters of that place, which, it was hoped, might still have a beneficial influence on a frame now reduced almost to the last stage of debility. He accordingly went thither in December.—Soon after his arrival he had a fit of the gout; and thought himself better for a short time. But the gout appeared again during his stay at Bath; and he never afterwards recovered even a moderate degree of strength. His appetite almost entirely failed; and, it being deemed improper for him to drink the waters, he left Bath, and was in such a debilitated state, that he was four days on the road to Putney, at which place he arrived, on the eleventh of January, accompanied by Sir Walter Farquhar, his medical attendant.

When a consultation was held the next day, with Dr. Baillie and Dr. Reynolds, they told the Bishop of Lincoln, who had repaired to Putney, that they saw no danger, no disease, but great weakness, in consequence of the gout, and they thought he might recover in a few weeks. They stated the necessity of *quiet*; but the approaching meeting of Parliament, and the state of Mr. Pitt's affairs, were such as to leave him little prospect of enjoying it.

Mr. Pitt felt better on the Sunday; and on the Monday morning he took an airing in his coach; but, in the evening, Lord Castlereagh and Lord Hawkesbury, having obtained permission from the physicians to see him, entered upon some points of public business, probably relating to the dissolution of the new confederacy, by the peace of Presburgh,

* It is to be lamented that a complete history of the Marquis Wellesley's administration has not been given to the public, as a faithful record of his actions, while Governor-general of India, would supply the best answer to the numerous aspersions which have been cast on the public character of a nobleman, who may justly be considered as the *first Statesman* of the present day.

(which had been concluded about three weeks before) which visibly agitated and affected him. Mr. Pitt, after this interview, observed that, during the conversation, he felt some sensation in his stomach which, he feared, it might be difficult to remove. On Tuesday, the fourteenth, Mr. Pitt again went out in his carriage, for the *last* time. His strength was manifestly diminished. On his return, he saw his brother, Lord Chatham; and on Wednesday, the fifteenth, Mr. Rose was admitted to him for a few minutes, and was very much stricken by his emaciated appearance. He was able to take but very little nourishment; his powers of digestion were greatly impaired; and scarcely any thing would remain on his stomach. He seldom spoke, and displayed an anxiety to follow the directions of the physicians, "to be as quiet as possible, and completely to divest his mind of all public business." He desired the Bishop of Lincoln, who remained with him, from the period of his return from Bath to the day of his death, to open all his letters, and to communicate only such parts of them as he should consider it necessary for him to know.

On the seventeenth, the physicians admitted, that Mr. Pitt was much weaker, but still maintained that there were no unfavourable symptoms. —At the same time, they declared their opinion, that he would not be able to attend to business in less time than *two months*, and expressed a doubt of his ability to take an *active* part, in the House of Commons, during the winter.

The Bishop of Lincoln was, naturally, very urgent with the physicians to allow him to apprize Mr. Pitt of the probable duration of his confinement, in order that he might decide on the propriety of resigning, or of retaining, his office. But the physicians were unanimously, and decidedly, of opinion, that nothing should be said to their patient on the subject. Mr. Pitt daily grew worse; and on Monday, the twentieth, the physicians declared, "the symptoms were unpromising, and his situation was hazardous." In the evening of that day, he became much worse; and his mind, as is usual in cases of extreme debility, occasionally wandered.—Sir Walter Farquhar passed the night by his bed-side, and, at four o'clock, on Wednesday morning, he called up the Bishop of

Lincoln, telling him he was much alarmed, and could now no longer object to any communication which the Bishop might think proper to make him. The Bishop, who appears never to have entertained those hopes which the medical attendants encouraged, had continually pressed the physicians to permit him to intimate to Mr. Pitt that his situation was *precarious*, in order that he might receive his instructions, respecting his affairs and papers, and call his attention to religious duties; but they had constantly affirmed, that they saw *no danger*, and could not sanction any proceeding which might create agitation of mind, as such agitation might be productive of serious mischief.

The Bishop immediately went to Mr. Pitt's bed-side, and told him he found it to be his duty to inform him, that his situation was considered as precarious, and requested his leave to read prayers to him, and to administer the Sacrament. Mr. Pitt looked earnestly at the Bishop for a few moments, and then, with perfect composure, turned his head to Sir Walter Farquhar, who stood on the other side of the bed, and slowly said,—"How long do you think I have to live?" The physician answered, he could not say, and expressed a faint hope of his recovery. A half smile on Mr. Pitt's countenance shewed that he placed this language to its true account. In answer to the Bishop's request to pray with him, Mr. Pitt said,—"I fear I have, like too many other men, neglected prayer too much to have any ground for hope, that it can be efficacious on a *death-bed*—but,"—rising as he spoke, and clasping his hands with the utmost fervour and devotion,—"I throw myself *entirely*" (the last word being pronounced with a strong emphasis) "upon the *mercy* of God, *through the merits of Christ!*" The Bishop assured him, that the frame of his mind, at this awful moment, was exactly such as might, reasonably, be expected, to render prayer acceptable and useful.

The Bishop then read prayers, and Mr. Pitt joined in them, with calm and humble piety. He repeatedly expressed, *in the strongest manner*, his sense of his own unworthiness to appear in the presence of God; disclaiming all ideas of merit, but with a conscience clear and undisturbed. He appealed to the Bishop's knowledge of the steadiness of his religious

principles, and said, it had *ever* been his *wish* and *endeavour* to act *rightly*; and to fulfil his duty to God and to the world; but that he was very sensible of many errors and failures. He declared that he was perfectly resigned to the will of God; that he felt no enmity towards any one; but died in peace with all mankind; and expressed his hope, at once *humble* and *confident*, of eternal happiness through the intercession of his Redeemer.

Mr. Pitt desired that the settlement of his affairs and papers might be left to his brother and the Bishop of Lincoln. Adverting to his family, he said,—" I wish a thousand, or fifteen hundred, a year to be given to my nieces—*if* the public should think my long services deserving it; but I do not presume to think that I have *earned it*." He expressed great concern about Lady Hester and Mr. Stanhope, but his anxiety, on their account, seemed to be abated by the recollection that they had a *father*. He attempted to give some written directions respecting the disposal of his papers; but, finding himself unable to write legibly, he resigned the pen to the Bishop, who wrote what Mr. Pitt dictated. Mr. Pitt afterwards read what was written, and signed the different papers, in the presence of Sir Walter Farquhar, and of several of his servants, who had remained in the room a part of the time in which Mr. Pitt was engaged in religious duties, and heard this great and good man profess the faith, and hope, and charity, of an humbly pious Christian.

Mr. Pitt was much exhausted by these exertions, and very soon grew much worse. About two o'clock on the Wednesday afternoon, he suffered much for some time, and seemed to struggle for breath. He then fell into a kind of stupor; but remained sensible almost to the last. About a quarter past four on Thursday morning, the twenty-third of January, 1806,—the anniversary of that day on which, five and twenty years before, he had first become a member of the British Senate,—he breathed his last, without struggle, and without pain. He was then in his forty-seventh year.

In attempting to delineate the character of Mr. Pitt, so shortly after the public has been deprived of the benefit of his eminent talents, and

while so many persons are living, who, in the important political questions of the day, ranged themselves either on his side, or on that of his great opponent, it is highly probable that, while, on the one hand, I may not satisfy his most zealous partizans, and his most ardent admirers, I may, on the other, far exceed, in approbation and praise, every thing which his political adversaries are willing to admit.

It is, indeed, a matter of no small difficulty, to disconnect entirely our estimate of the talents of the leaders of political parties, from our favour or hostility to the measures which they adopt. We often admire great abilities, as much for the cause in which they are engaged,—and, in truth, it is the *application* of talents that can alone justify rational admiration,—as for any powers of the human mind, which may be displayed in the support of it; and it is not always easy to discriminate accurately by which of these considerations our judgment is regulated.

The House of Commons was, perhaps, at no period, more completely divided in opinion, than during the lives of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox. The partisans of each naturally exalted the talents of their leader; but, while their respective friends were disputing which shone most conspicuous in every debate, each of these eminent men did the most ample justice to the powers of his rival. In making this observation, however, it is necessary to state, that it applies only to the last twelve or fourteen years of Mr. Pitt's life, for it is well known that, in the early part of his political career, Mr. Fox was inclined very much to undervalue his abilities, and to impute to arrogance and presumption that confidence which he afterwards admitted to rest upon the most solid and substantial grounds.

As a Statesman, the resources, as well as the firmness of Mr. Pitt's mind, have been amply demonstrated by the measures which he adopted, to meet the various, and unforeseen, difficulties with which this nation was surrounded, during the period of his administration. Abroad, he had to struggle with the most gigantic power, which ever raised itself in opposition to the greatness of his country; while, at home, he had to support, at the same time, commercial and national credit, to allay the turbulent spirit of mutiny, to extinguish the raging flames of rebellion,

to provide even for the importunate calls of famine. The energies of his mind were most eminently exerted upon those important occasions; and, in spite of internal distractions, he carried the power of the nation to a greater height than it had ever attained, at any former period.

It will not soon be forgotten with what industry and effect he applied himself to the management of the revenue, and how speedily he restored order to the confused state of our finances. By simplifying the public accounts he rendered a subject easily intelligible, which had before been involved in extreme intricacy; and, by pointing out the defects of former plans, and suggesting new and more approved systems, he carried with him the sense of the nation in providing for that heavy expenditure, which the peculiar exigency of the times brought upon the State. Nor was he less fortunate in removing, upon difficult occasions, those embarrassments in which the trade of the country was involved, and which, at one period, threatened it with total stagnation; and when they, who, from their habitual pursuits, might have been thought best qualified, and most likely, to suggest a remedy for these evils, were lost in astonishment, distrust, and dismay, he dispelled their fears, as it were by a charm, revived the confidence of our merchants and manufacturers, and restored our commerce to its accustomed activity and enterprize. The plan of Commercial Exchequer Bills;—the establishment of the Sinking Fund;—the suspension of Cash Payments at the Bank;—the System of War Taxes;—were measures which originated, exclusively, with himself; and were calculated, with profound ability, to meet the various exigencies to which they were applied. Even his enemies, who were disposed to deny him almost every other merit as a Minister, acknowledged him to be the ablest financier whom the nation had ever produced; and, while they made this acknowledgement, they did full justice to the pure disinterestedness, and the inflexible integrity, with which he conducted that branch of the public business.

As a parliamentary orator his powers were various. In statement he was perspicuous, in declamation animated. If he had to explain a financial account he was clear and accurate. If he wanted to rouse a just indignation, for the wrongs of the country, he was rapid, vehement,

glowing, and impassioned. And whether his discourse was argumentative or declamatory, it always displayed a happy choice of expression, and a fluency of diction, which could not fail to delight his hearers. So singularly select, felicitous, and appropriate, was his language, that, it has often been remarked, a word of his speech could scarcely be changed without prejudice to its harmony, vigour, or effect. He seldom was satisfied with standing on the defensive in debate; but was proud to contrast his own actions with the avowed intentions of his opponents. These intentions, too, he often exposed with the most pointed sarcasm, a weapon which, perhaps, no speaker ever wielded with more dexterity and force than himself. He admired much, in Mr. Fox, the happy effect with which he illustrated his arguments, by the application of well-known anecdotes, or by passages from modern authors; but he did not imitate him in this respect;—on the other hand, he used to condemn his habit of repetition.

Mr. Pitt's love of amplification has been sometimes urged as detracting from his excellence as an orator; but it was his own remark, that every person who addressed a public assembly, and was anxious to be distinctly understood, and to make an impression upon particular points, must either be copious upon those points, or repeat them, and that, as a speaker, he preferred copiousness to repetition. Of his eloquence, it may be observed generally, that it combined the eloquence of Tully with the energy of Demosthenes. It was spontaneous; always great, it shone with peculiar, with unequalled, splendour, in a reply, which precluded the possibility of previous study; while it fascinated the imagination by the brilliancy of language, it convinced the judgment by the force of argument;—like an impetuous torrent, it bore down all resistance; extorting the admiration even of those who most severely felt its strength, and who most earnestly deprecated its effect. It is unnecessary, and might be presumptuous, to enter more minutely into the character of Mr. Pitt's eloquence;—there are many living witnesses of its powers;—it will be admired as long as it shall be remembered. A few of his speeches in Parliament were published by his friends, and some of them under his own superintendence;—but it has been observed, that they were considerably weakened in effect by his own

corrections; that, if they gained any thing in accuracy, they lost more in vigour and spirit;—and that he had not himself the power of improving, upon reflection, the just and happy expression in which his thoughts were conveyed, as they occurred in the course of debate.

As a public man, Mr. Pitt trusted his character to his public conduct; he rejected those arts and aids to which inferior men have sometimes had recourse to prop their fame; and he disdained to court popularity at the expence of unbecoming condescension; he never failed to be generally esteemed where he was generally known; but his public occupations did not permit him to enjoy much of the pleasures of private society, and his hours of retirement and relaxation were chiefly confined to the circle of a few friends, which circle he did not seem inclined to extend. Those hours, indeed, were few, for his life may be said to have been devoted to the public service; and, perhaps, to have been sacrificed by that devotion; for his health had gradually declined for the last five years of his life; but the vigour of his mind was unimpaired, and directed, in spite of a feeble frame, with the most unremitted anxiety, to promote the interests and welfare of the country. With him, indeed, his *country* was ever the *first* object, *self* the *last*.

It would be highly unjust, however, to dismiss the character of Mr. Pitt without correcting the erroneous impression which has too generally prevailed, that he was, in society, cold, distant, and reserved. So far from it, that, in the relations of private life, he was no less amiable, than he was eminent in his public conduct; and, in the company of his select friends, none charmed more by the ease, playfulness, and vivacity of conversation. He possessed a peculiar sweetness and equanimity of temper, which, under all the varying circumstances of health and sickness, of good and adverse fortune, was never ruffled. The victory of Trafalgar, though he felt at it the honest pride of an Englishman, elated him to no unbecoming height; nor did the overthrow of his dearest hopes at Austerlitz, though it affected him most sensibly, sink him to an unmanly dejection. Yet this calmness and self-possession arose not from any apathy or coldness; on the contrary, the varied expression of his countenance, and the fire of his eye, shewed him to be, what he

really was, exquisitely sensible to every feeling;—but they were the natural result of a strong and well-regulated mind—of the conscious rectitude of his measures, and of the happy mildness of his disposition.

The same benevolence and simplicity of heart strongly marked his manners and deportment, which were, in the highest degree, prepossessing. They bespoke the total absence of any thing like moroseness in his nature. With the most playful vivacity, he assumed no superiority in conversation; nor ever oppressed any man with the strength of his talents, or the brilliancy of his wit. It was matter of surprize how so much fire could be mitigated, and yet not enfeebled, by so much gentleness;—and how such power could be so delightful. Modesty was a striking feature in Mr. Pitt's character; he was attentive to the humblest, and kindly patient to the weakest, opinions. No man was ever more beloved by his friends, or inspired those who had the happiness of living in his society with a more sincere and affectionate attachment. In his conduct, he was rigidly just, and strictly moral; and, as his virtues were greater, so were his failings less, than fall to the lot of most men.

On the twenty-seventh of January, the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Henry Lascelles, resolved, "that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions that the remains of the Right Honourable William Pitt be interred at the public expence, and that a monument be erected, in the collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of that excellent statesman, with an inscription, expressive of the public sense of so great and irreparable a loss; and to assure his Majesty, that this House will make good the expences attending the same."

On the third of February, the House, on the motion of Mr. Cartwright, further resolved, "that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to represent to his Majesty, that this House, having received information that, on the death of the Right Honourable William Pitt,

he left debts to a considerable amount, for the payment of which his property has been found insufficient, and being desirous to shew every testimony of their esteem and respect for the memory of the said Right Honourable William Pitt, most humbly beseech his Majesty to advance a sum, not exceeding forty thousand pounds, towards the payment of the said debts, and to assure his Majesty that this House will make good the same."

This sum was barely sufficient to discharge the debts which Mr. Pitt had contracted, and which had been, in a course of accumulation, during the whole period of his administration. His original private fortune was ten thousand pounds, and the late Duke of Rutland left him a legacy of three thousand. Immediately after his decease it was determined, that some person should examine into the state of his affairs, and it was upon their estimate of the amount of his debts, and of the probable produce of his effects, that the forty thousand pounds was voted by Parliament. Previous to his entrance into public life, Mr. Pitt's expences never exceeded his income. But the inadequacy of the salary annexed to his appointments to meet the expenditure unavoidably attached to them, and the impracticability of attention, on the part of a man who had the affairs of an empire to regulate, to the economical regulations of his household, involved him in embarrassments. The only extra expences which he incurred were for improvements at Walmer and at Holwood, which constituted, indeed, his only amusement, during his hours of relaxation, from official labours;—an amusement at once rational, congenial, and honourable, to a great and virtuous mind, which never indulged in habits of dissipation, nor rioted in licentious enjoyments. He was buried (on the twenty-second of February) in Westminster Abbey, near the *north door*, in the aisle in which the monument of his father stands. His funeral was a public one; and was attended by a considerable number of his political and private friends. The Dukes of York, Cumberland, and Cambridge, the Archbishop of Canterbury, several of the Bishops, and many Members, of both Houses of Parliament, were present. The monument to be erected to his memory, is to be placed over the *west door* of the Abbey.

APPENDIX A.

Manifesto of the British Government against France.

THE negotiation, which an anxious desire for the restoration of peace had induced his Majesty to open at Paris, having been abruptly terminated by the French Government, the King thinks it due to himself, and to his people, to state, in this public manner, the circumstances which have preceded and attended a transaction of so much importance to the general interests of Europe.

It is well known that, early in the present year, his Majesty, laying aside the consideration of many circumstances of difficulty and discouragement, determined to take such steps as were best calculated to open the way for negotiation, if any corresponding desire prevailed on the part of his enemies. He directed an overture to be made in his name, by his Minister in Switzerland, for the purpose of ascertaining the dispositions of the French Government with respect to peace. The answer which he received in return was at once haughty and evasive; it affected to question the sincerity of those dispositions of which his Majesty's conduct afforded so unequivocal a proof; it raised groundless objections to the mode of negotiation proposed by his Majesty; (that of a general congress, by which peace has so often been restored to Europe) but it studiously passed over in silence his Majesty's desire to learn what other mode would be preferred by France. It, at the same time, asserted a principle which was stated as an indispensable preliminary to all negotiation—a principle under which the terms of peace must have been regulated, not by the usual considerations of justice, policy, and reciprocal convenience; but by an implicit submission, on the part of all the powers, to a claim founded on the internal laws and separate constitution of France, as having full authority to supersede the treaties entered into by independent states, to govern their interests, to controul their engagements, and to dispose of their dominion.

A pretension in itself so extravagant, could, in no instance, have been admitted, or even listened to for a moment. Its application, to the present case, led to nothing less than that France should, as a preliminary to all discussion, retain nearly all her conquests, and those particularly in which his Majesty was most concerned, both from the ties of interest, and the sacred obligations of treaties;—that she should, in like manner, recover back all that had been conquered from her in every part of the world; and that she should be left at liberty to bring

forward such further demands, on all other points of negotiation, as such unqualified submission on the part of those with whom she treated could not fail to produce.

On such grounds as these it was sufficiently evident, that no negotiation could be established;—neither did the answer of his Majesty's enemies afford any opening for continuing the discussion, since the mode of negotiation, offered by his Majesty, had been peremptorily rejected by them, and no other had been stated in which they were willing to concur.

His Majesty was, however, not discouraged even by this result, from still pursuing such measures as appeared to him most conducive to the end of peace; and the wishes of his ally, the Emperor, corresponding with those which his Majesty had manifested, sentiments of a similar tendency were expressed on the part of his Imperial Majesty, at the time of opening the campaign; but the continuance of the same spirit and principles, on the part of the enemy, rendered this fresh overture equally unsuccessful.

While the Government of France thus persisted in obstructing every measure that could even open the way to negotiation, no endeavour was omitted to mislead the public opinion throughout all Europe, with respect to the real cause of the prolongation of the war, and to cast a doubt on those dispositions which could alone have dictated the steps taken by his Majesty and his august ally.

In order to deprive his enemies of all possibility of subterfuge or evasion, and in the hope that a just sense of the continued calamities of war, and of the increasing distresses of France herself, might, at length, have led to more just and pacific dispositions, his Majesty renewed, in another form, and through the intervention of friendly powers, a proposal for opening negotiations for peace. The manner in which this intervention was received indicated the most hostile dispositions towards Great Britain, and, at the same time, afforded to all Europe a striking instance of that injurious and offensive conduct which is observed on the part of the French Government towards all other countries. The repeated overtures made in his Majesty's name were, nevertheless, of such a nature, that it was at last found impossible to persist in the absolute rejection of them, without the direct and undisguised avowal of a determination to refuse to Europe all hope of the restoration of tranquillity. A channel was therefore, at length, indicated, through which the Government of France professed itself willing to carry on a negotiation; and a readiness was expressed (though in terms far remote from any spirit of conciliation) to receive a Minister authorized by his Majesty to proceed to Paris for that purpose.

Many circumstances might have been urged, as affording powerful motives against adopting this suggestion, until the Government of France had given some indication of a spirit better calculated to promote the success of such a mission, and to meet these advances on the part of Great Britain. The King's desire, for the restoration of general peace, on just and honourable terms, his concern for the interests of his subjects, and his determination to leave to his enemies no pretext for imputing to him the consequences of their own ambition, induced him to overlook every such consideration, and to take a step which these reasons alone could justify.

The repeated endeavours of the French Government to defeat this mission in its outset, and to break off the intercourse thus opened, even before the first steps towards negotiation could be taken; the indecent and injurious language employed with a view to irritate the captious and frivolous objections raised for the purpose of obstructing the progress of the discussion; all these have sufficiently appeared from the official papers which passed on both sides, and which are known to all Europe.

But above all, the abrupt termination of the negotiation has afforded the most conclusive proof, that at no period of it was any real wish for peace entertained on the part of the French Government.

After repeated evasion and delay, the Government had at length consented to establish, as the basis of the negotiation, a principle proposed by his Majesty, liberal in its own nature, equitable towards his enemies, and calculated to provide for the interest of his allies, and of Europe. It had been agreed, that compensation should be made to France, by proportionable restitutions from his Majesty's conquests on that power, for those arrangements to which she should be called upon to consent, in order to satisfy the just pretensions of his allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe. At the desire of the French Government itself, Memorials were presented by his Majesty's Minister, which contained the outlines of the terms of peace, grounded on the basis so established, and in which his Majesty proposed to carry, to the utmost possible extent, the application of a principle so equitable with respect to France, and so liberable on his Majesty's part. The delivery of these papers was accompanied by a declaration expressly and repeatedly made, both verbally and in writing, that his Majesty's Minister was willing and prepared to enter, with a spirit of conciliation and fairness, into the discussion of the different points there contained, or into that of any other proposal or scheme of peace, which the French Government might wish to substitute in its place.

In reply to this communication, he received a demand, in form the most offensive, and in substance the most extravagant, that ever was made in the course of any negotiation. It was peremptorily required of him, that, in the very outset of the business, when no answer had been given by the French Government to his first proposal, when he had not even learnt, in any regular shape, the nature or extent of the objections to it, and much less received from that Government any other offer or plan of peace, he should, in twenty-four hours, deliver in a statement of the final terms to which his court would, in any case, accede—a demand tending evidently to shut the door to all negotiation, to preclude all discussion, all explanation, all possibility of the amicable adjustment of points of difference; a demand in its nature preposterous, in its execution impracticable, since it is plain that no such ultimate resolution respecting a general plan of peace, ever can be rationally formed, much less declared, without knowing what points are principally objected to by the enemy, and what facilities he may be willing to offer in return for concession in those respects. Having declined compliance with this demand, and explained the reasons which rendered it inadmissible, but having, at the same time, expressly renewed the declaration of his readiness to enter into the discussion of the proposal he had conveyed, or of any other which might be communicated to him, the King's Minister received no other answer than an abrupt command to quit Paris in forty-eight hours. If, in addition to

such an insult, any further proof were necessary of the dispositions of those by whom it was offered, such proof would be abundantly supplied from the contents of the note in which this order was conveyed. The mode of negotiation, on which the French Government had itself insisted, is there rejected, and no practicable means left open for treating with effect. The basis of negotiation, so recently established by mutual consent, is there disclaimed, and, in its room, a principle clearly inadmissible is re-asserted as the only ground on which France can consent to treat: the very same principle which had been brought forward in reply to his Majesty's first overtures from Switzerland, which had then been rejected by his Majesty, but which now appears never to have been, in fact, abandoned by the Government of France, however inconsistent with that on which they had expressly agreed to treat.

It is therefore necessary that all Europe should understand, that the rupture of the negotiation at Paris does not arise from the failure of any sincere attempt on the part of France, to reconcile, by fair discussion, the views and interests of the contending powers. Such a discussion has been repeatedly invited, and even solicited, on the part of his Majesty, but has been, in the first instance, and absolutely, precluded by the act of the French Government.

It arises exclusively from the determination of that Government to reject all means of peace—a determination which appeared but too strongly in all the preliminary discussions; which was clearly manifested in the demand of an ultimatum, made in the very outset of the negotiation, but which is proved beyond all possibility of doubt by the obstinate adherence to a claim which never can be admitted—a claim that the construction which that Government affects to put (though, even in that respect, unsupported by the fact) on the internal constitution of its own country, shall be received by all other nations as paramount to every known principle of public law in Europe, as superior to the obligations of treaties, to the ties of common interest, to the most pressing and urgent considerations of general security.

On such grounds it is that the French Government has abruptly terminated a negotiation, which it commenced with reluctance, and conducted with every inclination to prevent its final success. On these motives it is, that the further effusion of blood, the continued calamities of war, the interruptions of peaceable and friendly intercourse among mankind, the prolonged distresses of Europe, and the accumulated miseries of France itself are, by the Government of that country, to be justified to the world.

His Majesty, who had entered into the negotiation with good faith, who has suffered no impediment to prevent his prosecuting it with earnestness and sincerity, has now only to lament its abrupt termination; and to renew, in the face of all Europe, the solemn declaration, that, whenever his enemies shall be disposed to enter on the work of a general pacification, in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object, with a view to which he has already offered such considerable sacrifices on his part, and which is now retarded only by the exorbitant pretensions of his enemies.

Westminster, 27th Dec. 1796

APPENDIX B.

Protest of Earl Fitzwilliam, against the Address of the House of Lords, to the Throne, on his Majesty's Speech, announcing the opening of a Negotiation for Peace with the French Republic.

DISSENTIENT,

1st. Because, by this Address, amended as it stands, the sanction of the Lords is given to a series of measures, as ill-judged, with regard to their object, as they are derogatory from the dignity of his Majesty's Crown, and from the honour of this kingdom. The reiteration of solicitations for peace to a species of power, with whose very existence all fair and equitable accommodation is incompatible, can have no other effect than that which it is notorious all our solicitation have hitherto had. They must increase the arrogance and ferocity of the common enemy of all nations; they must fortify the credit, and fix the authority of an odious Government over an enslaved people; they must impair the confidence of all other powers in the magnanimity, constancy, and fidelity, of the British Councils; and it is much to be apprehended it will inevitably tend to break the spring of that energy, and to lower that spirit which has characterised, in former times, this high-minded nation; and which, far from sinking under misfortune, has even risen with the difficulties and dangers in which our country has been involved.

2d. Because no peace, such as may be capable of recruiting the strength, œconomising the means, augmenting the resources, and providing for the safety of this kingdom, and its inseparable connections and dependencies, can be had with the usurped power now exercising authority in France, considering the description, the character, and the conduct, of those who compose that Government; the methods by which they have obtained their power, the policy by which they hold it, and the maxims they have adopted, openly professed, and uniformly acted on, towards the destruction of all governments not formed on their model, and subservient to their domination.

3d. Because the idea that this kingdom is competent to defend itself, its laws, liberties, and religion, under the general subjugation of all Europe, is presumptuous in the extreme, contra-

dictory to the supposed motives for our present eager solicitations for peace, and is certainly contrary to the standing policy both of state and commerce, by which Great Britain has hitherto flourished.

4th. Because, while the common enemy exercises his power over the several states of Europe in the way we have seen, it is impossible long to preserve our trade, or, what cannot exist without it, our naval power. This hostile system seizes on the keys of the dominions of these powers, without any consideration of their friendship, their enmity, or their neutrality; prescribes laws to them as to conquered provinces; mulcts and fines them at pleasure; forces them, without any particular quarrel, into direct hostility with this kingdom, and expels us from such ports and markets as she thinks fit; insomuch that, Europe remaining under its present slavery, there is no harbour which we can enter without her permission, either in a commercial or a naval character. This general interdict cannot be begged off; we must resist it by our power, or we are already in a state of vassalage.

5th. Because, whilst this usurped power shall continue thus constituted, and thus disposed, no security whatever can be hoped for in our colonies and plantations, those invaluable sources of our national wealth, and our naval power. This war has shewn that the power prevalent in France, by intentionally disorganising the plantation system, which France had in common with all other European nations; and, by inverting the order and relations therein established, has been able, with a naval force, altogether contemptible, and with very inconsiderable succours from Europe, to baffle, in a great measure, the most powerful armament ever sent from this country into the West Indies, and at an expence hitherto unparalleled; and has, by the force of example, and by the effects of her machinations, produced, at little or no expence to herself, either of blood or treasure, universal desolation and ruin, by the general destruction of every thing valuable and necessary for cultivation, throughout several of our islands, lately among the most flourishing and productive. The new system, by which these things have been effected, leaves our colonies equally endangered in peace as in war. It is, therefore, with this general system, of which the West India scheme is but a ramification, that all ancient establishments are essentially at war for the sake of self-preservation.

6th. Because it has been declared from the Throne, and, in effect, the principle has been adopted by Parliament, that there was no way likely to obtain a peace, commonly safe and honourable, but through the ancient and legitimate Government long established in France. That Government, in its lawful succession, has been solemnly recognized, and assistance and protection as solemnly promised to those Frenchmen who should exert themselves in its restoration. The political principle upon which this recognition was made, is very far from being weakened by the conduct of the newly-invented Government. Nor are our obligations of good faith pledged on such strong motives of policy to those who have been found in their allegiance dissolved, nor can they be so, until fairly-directed efforts have been made to secure this great fundamental point. None have yet been employed with the smallest degree of vigour and perseverance.

7th. Because the example of the great change made by the usurpation in the moral and

political world, more dangerous than all her conquests, is, by the present procedure, confirmed in all its force. It is the first successful example furnished by history of the subversion of the ancient Government of a great country, and of all its laws, orders, and religion, by the corruption of mercenary armies, and by the seduction of a multitude bribed by confiscation to sedition, in defiance of the sense, and to the entire destruction of almost the whole proprietary body of the nation. The fatal effects of this example must be felt in every country. New means, new arms, new pretexts, are furnished to ambition; and new persons are intoxicated with that poison.

8th. Because our eagerness in suing for peace may induce the persons exercising power in France erroneously to believe, that we act from necessity, and are unable to continue the war; a persuasion which, in the event of an actual peace, will operate as a temptation to them to renew that conduct which brought on the present war, neither shall we have any of the usual securities in peace. In their treaties, they do not acknowledge the obligation of that law, which, for ages, has been common to all Europe. They have not the same sentiments, nor the same ideas, of their interest in the conservation of peace, which have, hitherto, influenced all regular Governments; they do not, in the same manner, feel public distress, or the private misery of their subjects; they will not find the same difficulty, on the commencement of a new war, to call their whole force into sudden action, where, by the law, every citizen is a soldier, and the person and properties of all are liable, at once, to arbitrary requisitions. On the other hand, no attempt has been made to shew in what manner, whether by alliances, by force, military or naval, or by the improvement and augmentation of our finances, we shall be better able to resist their hostile attempts, after the peace, than at the present hour. If we remain armed, we cannot reap the ordinary advantage of peace in œconomy; if we disarm, we shall be subject to be driven into a new war, under every circumstance of disadvantage, unless we now prepare ourselves to suffer, with patience and submission, whatever insults, indignities, and injuries, we may receive from that insolent, domineering, and unjust power.

9th. Because the inability of humbling ourselves again to solicit peace, in a manner which is a recognition of the French Republic, contrary to all the principles of war, the danger of peace if obtained, the improbability of its duration, and the perseverance of the enemy throughout the interval of peace in their mischievous system, is not conjecture, but certainty. It has been avowed by the actual governors of France, at the very moment when they had before them our application for a passport. They chose that moment for publishing a State Paper, breathing the most hostile mind. In it they stimulate, and goad us by language the most opprobrious and offensive. They frankly tell us, that it is not our interest to desire peace, for that they regard peace only as the opportunity of preparing fresh means for the annihilation of our naval power. By making peace they do not conceal that it will be their object—" to wrest from us our maritime preponderancy; to re-establish what they invidiously call the freedom of the seas; to give a new impulse to the Spanish, Dutch, and French, marines; and to carry to the highest degree of prosperity the industry and commerce of those nations," which they state to be our rivals,—which they charge us with " unjustly attacking, when we can no longer dupe; and which they throughout contemplate as their own dependencies, united in arms, and furnishing resources for our future humiliation and destruction. They resort to that

well-known and constant allusion of their's to ancient history, by which, representing "France as modern Rome, and England as modern Carthage," they accuse us of national perfidy, and hold England up as an object to be blotted out from the face of the earth. They falsely assert that the English nation supports, with impatience, the continuance of the war; and has extorted all his Majesty's overtures for peace "by complaints and reproaches;" and above all, not only in that passage, but, throughout their official note, they shew the most marked adherence to that insidious and intolerable policy of their system, by which they, from the commencement of the revolution, sought to trouble and subvert all the governments in Europe. They studiously disjoin the English nation from its Sovereign.

10th. Because, having acted, throughout the course of this awful and momentous crisis, upon the principles herein expressed; and after having, on the present occasion, not only fully reconsidered, and jealously examined their soundness and validity, but gravely attended to, and scrupulously weighed the merits of all those arguments which have been offered to induce a dereliction of them, conscientiously adhering to, and firmly abiding by them, I thus solemnly record them, in justification of my own conduct, and in discharge of the duty I owe to my King, my Country, and general interests of civil Society.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

APPENDIX C.

THOUGH a reference to the files of the Morning Chronicle, from the first dawn of the French revolution, to the day of this debate, would sufficiently justify this remark; yet it may not be wholly useless to exhibit a few proofs of its justice.—The Duke of Bedford, it has been seen, insisted on the *uniformity of its language* and conduct, during the period in question. Two or three extracts will suffice to prove the *correctness* of his Grace's assertion. "In the dreadful "scheme of requisition, which Mr. Pitt has resolved on, and which our representatives so "cordially abet, no time is to be given for remonstrance. Our readers will see that it is to be "hurried on with a degree of haste, almost unparalleled in the history of Finance. By the "impediments which are flung in the way of meetings, IT IS UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE *for the* "*people to meet and express their sentiments*, in any way that can avail them on the occasion. If "there was a single man in the country, who, in his heart, thought, that the PITT and GREN-"VILLE BILLS were constitutional measures; THIS PROOF of *their operation*, we think, will "correct his error." *Morning Chronicle, Thursday, Dec.* 7, 1797.

"It is proper the people should know, that they are NOT PREVENTED by the PITT and "GRENVILLE BILLS from meeting *in the Old English constitutional manner*, and to take into "consideration the grievous nature, and alarming tendency, of the double, treble, and qua-"druple assessment with which they are threatened." *Morning Chronicle, Monday, Dec.* 11, 1797.

"The rich *will not be affected* by the assessed taxes—even should they be more than trebled, "they would not be scratched by them." *M. C. Dec.* 2.

"The style of living, which our pride and vanity, our love of fashion, &c. has introduced, "must now *yield to the imperious law of necessity*." *M. C. Dec.* 2.

"It *exempts* the absolutely poor, and those who are so in the next degree." *M. C. Dec.* 2.

"It is ridiculous to say, that the tax will not fall with the most merciless severity on the "poor." *M. C. Dec.* 11.

"We *recommend* non-consumption agreements."

" *We are afraid* non-consumption agreements will become common." *M. C. Dec.* 12.

" Non-consumption agreements will be *impracticable* during the present year, &c." *M. C. Dec.* 11.

If his Grace could descry *uniformity* in such language and conduct as this, (and many other instances of a similar nature might be adduced) he must have had not merely the faith which removes mountains, but the spirit which reconciles contradictions.

The Earl of Derby, it has been seen, asserted, that the Morning Chronicle was never employed to undermine *the religious* and civil establishments of the country, and that it was distinguished for *its regard to the decencies of private life*, and by its disdain of all scandal on individuals, &c. It will not be denied, that constant attempts to render religion itself an object of contempt and derision have a direct and necessary tendency to undermine every *religious* establishment. As to its attacks on the *political* establishments, it would be an endless task to quote, or even to refer to, them. If, however, the Earl of Derby will turn over the pages of " the spirit of the Public Journals for 1797," and read a dialogue, entitled, " *The Alarmist*," and an address, " *To all the British dealers in blood and slaughter, who are under the rank of ensign*," he will find ample grounds for retracting this hasty and inconsiderate assertion; and, in the same collection, which is stocked with numerous extracts from the Morning Chronicle, his Lordship will see an Essay, called, " *The Cries of Bacchus*," in which the miracles of the Holy Founder of the Christian Faith are compared with those of the Pagan Deity!

When a solemn thanksgiving was ordered at St. Paul's, by our pious Sovereign, for the success of his arms, the Morning Chronicle was the first to ridicule this act of national devotion.

" It is probable that the French will have a thanksgiving for their successes, on the same " day as we have ours; they will beat us, however, for they have Robespierre's solemn thanks- " giving for a model." *Morn. Chron. Dec.* 18, 1797. It must be remembered, that the Pagan Farce, which the Morning Chronicle here recommends to the imitation of Englishmen, was devised by the atheistical philosophers of revolutionary France, and the principal part of it performed by a naked prostitute, who personated the *Goddess of Reason*; while GOBET, the constitutional Bishop of Paris, attended by his Clergy, made a formal abjuration of the Christian faith and worship; craving mercy of the *nation* " for having so long deceived them with the " absurdities of the *Impostor* CHRIST, and his *pretended* FATHER, whose doctrines he now " abjured with detestation and horror," promising thenceforth to acknowledge no other Deity than REASON.

On the 21st of December, the same paper ridiculed religion in the person of Mr. Wilberforce, who had recently published a book on the subject.

" Mr. Wilberforce would have been an admirable coadjutor to Oliver Cromwell, whose " seeking the Lord was of as much benefit to the country as Mr. Wilberforce's looking into " Jesus."

Well might a contemporary writer, adverting to this paragraph, and others of a similar nature, say to the people of England, " are they content to exchange rational liberty for anarchy, and the religion of their forefathers for atheism in its most horrid form? If so, they will do well to attend to these zealots of infidelity—these faithful copyists of the *Pere du Chesne*; they are the mouth-pieces of *the party*, and they speak to us in thunder."

But, to have written a book in favour of religion was a crime which the writers in this paper could neither forgive nor forget, it seems, for it made that gentleman the constant pretext for their attacks on religion.

In the Morning Chronicle of January 8, (1798) after calling " Church and King" a *scarecrow*, the same writer observes, " Mr. Wilberforce was yesterday the most conspicuous " figure in Hyde Park; the animal that bore him proceeded *with a stately and solemn pace*, as if " conscious of being bestrode by a GODLY man." Again, in the same paper—" The esteem in " which Mr. Wilberforce holds the cross of Christ, and the Treasury Bench, cannot be " expressed in terms of sufficient admiration." And, returning to the charge three days after, (January 11th) this writer observes " A correspondent cautions us against making a profane use " of Mr. WILBERFORCE's appearance on Sunday: that gentleman would not have been so " UNGODLY *as to gallop there* without a sufficient reason. It was the fulfilment of some pro- " phecy; and the horse he rode might be related to the White Horse of the Revelations."

I must content myself with a mere reference to further specimens of this impious trash, to be found in the Morning Chronicle of the 16th, 18th, and 19th of January; and of the 10th and 20th of February, 1798. Here I shall again use the words of that admirable writer, whose just sentiments on this subject I have already quoted.

" We intreat our readers to pause a moment in this place. They have seen a print, calling itself the *mouth-piece* of the PARTY, and, undoubtedly, speaking its sentiments;—after persisting, for years, in extenuating our successes, aggravating our misfortunes, and insulting our necessities; after reviling the whole system of our domestic economy, pouring every species of abuse on the mild and equitable distribution of justice here, and lavishing the most enthusiastic encomiums on the lawless and blood-stained tribunals of France,—they have seen it, we say, after all this, as if fearful that its detestable attempts might prove inadequate to the production of the great work of insurrection and murder, calling in the aid of ATHEISM, reviling the " *Cross of Christ*," and levelling its ridicule at the CREATOR, through the sides of a man who has no other claim to its abuse, than having written a book on the subject of religion." Yes, and we have seen peers of the realm, sitting in their judicial capacity, vouching for the soundness of its principles, and the purity of its conduct;—we have seen men, whose word is equivalent to the oath of less dignified christians, assert that it contained nothing " to undermine either the civil or the religious establishments of the country!"

One word or two on its alleged " regard to the decencies of private life; its disdain of all scandal on individuals, and of licentious personalities." In order to deter the women of Great Britain from contributing to the support of the country, at this most critical period of its

history, the Morning Chronicle attacked, with the most malevolent indecency, a most respectable lady, who resided in the vicinity of the capital, for no other reason than that she was reported to have added her mite to the voluntary contributions at the Bank.

" The alarm among the fair sex happily subsides. It arose from the mistake of an elderly " lady, who read, in a newspaper, that the French had ravished (ravaged) all Europe." *Morning Chronicle, January* 29, 1798.

" The prostitutes of Jermyn Street have agreed to subscribe *six nights* to the cause of " *religion*, because the *end*, as Mr. WILBERFORCE says, *sanctifies the means*." *Morning Chronicle, February 20th.*

The patriotic lady, who had given [illegible] mortal offence to this jacobin scribbler, was more pointedly attacked in various paragra[illegible]t, fortunately, without producing the desired effect. The only object, in extracting the few passages which have been quoted from the paper in question, is to shew what kind of *new* spirit had lately risen in the country, which Mr. Pitt had to encounter at this period; and farther, to demonstrate the excess to which the zeal, displayed by the leaders of the party, was carried; subduing alike all sense of public duty, all regard for truth, and all emotions of shame. Enough has been exhibited for this purpose, and the subject shall be dismissed in the words of a writer, who had viewed the licentious productions of the party with a more steady eye, a more correct judgment, and a more impartial mind, than were possessed by the noble persons whose notions of decency, propriety, consistency, and soundness of religious and political principles, have been here examined;—and who, in a solemn appeal to the people of England, on the danger of encouraging the circulation of such prints, briefly and aptly characterized them all, but more particularly that paper, which the leaders of the party in the House of Lords selected as the theme of their panegyric.

" ARE THEY HUSBANDS?—Chastity is continually treated by these papers with contempt or ridicule. ARE THEY FATHERS?—Youthful modesty is put to the blush by gross inuendos, or downright indecencies, in every column. ARE THEY CHRISTIANS?—REVELATION is an inexhaustible theme of mirth; the CROSS OF CHRIST is trampled on with savage exultation; and to look upon it with respect, is said to qualify a man for the friendship of an usurper and a murderer. ARE THEY LOVERS OF THEIR KING?—He is belied and insulted in every page. OF THEIR COUNTRY?—It is invariably traduced, its constitution despised, its laws reviled, its power depreciated; nay, (a circumstance till now unheard of) its fleets and armies declared to be without energy and without courage, and utterly incapable of facing an enemy whom they have scarce ever met but to defeat."*

* " It will not require the efforts of France to disarm us. Disgraced as we are, every puny " whipster may take our sword." *Morning Chronicle, February* 8, 1798.

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